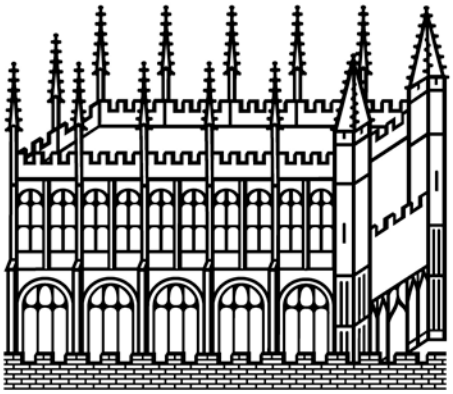

OUR RELIGIOUS HUMOURISTS

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WITH

ANECDOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

RELIGIOUS humorists! We fancy we hear someone exclaim, "Is it possible for anyone truly religious to indulge in humour?" Certainly it is, unless it be a sin to smile or a crime to be happy. There is a humorous side to our nature as well as a sober and sedate one, and to fight against our nature is not the way to serve the cause of sound morality or true religion. Were not men and women made to laugh as well as to weep, and much more for smiles than for tears? And if unseasonable mirth is sometimes rebuked in the Scriptures, is not also unseasonable fasting and solemnity? Be assured that because a face is uncommonly long, it does not follow that its possessor is

uncommonly pious. We would as soon trust a countenance got up on the broad as on the long gauge.

Our Heavenly Father, who has given us all things richly to enjoy, has evidently formed us for happiness, and would have us use all his gifts accordingly. He might have created us without a sense to discern fragrance in the rose, sweetness in honey, or beauty in the landscape; but having bestowed these senses it is evident that he intends the healthy exercise of them to our enjoyment. But what of the sense of humour? Finding as we do this faculty in one form or another in almost every one, is it unreasonable to assume that it has a Divine origin, and has been bestowed upon men for some beneficent purpose? Man has so many evils to contend against that the wonder is that our poor humanity does not sink under its burden. May it not be that He who has given to the reed its power "to rise upright from the stormy blast," has also given humour to man to assist him to mount above the adverse billows of life's rough sea? For unquestionably a lively wit, or playful imagination, is an element of buoyancy, a sweetener of the bitter cup of life. There is a time to laugh as well as a time to weep, and the sense of the ludicrous may serve to chase away the gloom of many an anxious moment, and lessen the burden of many an earthly care. Cowper, who could be both grave and gay, asks:—

"Is sparkling wit the world's exclusive right?
The fixed fee simple of the vain and light?
Can hopes of heaven, bright prospects of an hour,

That comes to waft us out of sorrow's power,
Obscure or quench a faculty that finds
Its happiest soil in the serenest minds ?
Religion curbs indeed its wanton play,
And brings the trifler under vigorous sway,
But gives it usefulnesss unknown before,
And purifies and makes it shine the more.
A Christian's wit is inoffensive light ;
A beam that aids, but never grieves the sight."

Joy and laughter are frequently associated in the Bible. Sarah, on receiving the promise of a son, said "God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear me will laugh with me." And the returned exiles from Babylon sang, "When the Lord turned away the captivity of Zion we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." There are also instances of humorous sarcasm in the Scriptures. Elijah for instance mocked the priests of Baal, saying, "Cry aloud for he is a god;" and Christ reproving the Pharisees, said, "Full well ye set aside the law by your traditions," &c. ; and Paul is certainly full of sly humour when he writes, "Now ye are full," &c., &c.

The uses of humour are numerous. It can lighten the heavy load of life and do much to disperse its cares. Bunyan says :—

"Some things are of the nature as to make
One's fancy chuckle while his heart doth ache ;"

while Washington Irving declares that "honest good humour is the oil and wine of social life." L'Estrange says "Man cannot exist without emotion. When we

consider how necessary amusement is for all, and how bounteously it has been supplied by Providence, we feel certain that man will always have beside him this light which, although it cannot lead as a star, can still brighten his path and cheer his spirit upon the pilgrimage of life."

Many highly intellectual and truly successful ministers have found humour of great service to them in the accomplishment of their work. They have employed it to banish dulness and secure and retain the attention of their hearers. Mr. Spurgeon, for example, in addressing his students, says in one of his addresses :—

My lectures are colloquial, familiar, full of anecdote, and often humorous; they are purposely made so, to suit the occasion. At the end of the week I meet the students, and find them weary with sterner duties, and I judge it best to be as lively and interesting in my prelections as I can. They have had their fill of classics, mathematics, and divinity, and are only in a condition to receive something which will attract and secure their attention, and fix their hearts. My work has been compared to the sharpening of the pin; the fashioning of the head, the straitening, the laying on of the metal, and the polishing, have been done during the week, and then the process concludes with an effort to give point and sharpness. To succeed in this the lecturer must not be dull himself, nor demand any great effort from his audience."

Speaking of "Wit and Humour in the Pulpit," the Rev. E. P. Hood says: "Certainly, it has usually been

the case that those sacred orators who have moved multitudes have done so, if not principally, yet frequently, by offences against the canons of good taste . . . . Against the legitimate use of humour, wit, and satire in the pulpit we have little to say: those who can use them with skill may find those weapons as available, perhaps more available, than any; for they certainly are weapons which lie on the side of the more simply human part of human nature. We gain power over men principally as we remove from the regions of the abstract. Even imagination is most powerful, not when it ascends into the heights and heavens of unrealised poetry, but when it rather descends into the household and the shop; and here is its most legitimate realm. No one can doubt that humour may be purified who has heard some of the great pulpit masters of even the present day; and we believe that its judicious use, reined and guided by piety, tenderness, and taste, would do more to bring truth near to the hearts of the multitudes than any other element of speech."

Sydney Smith, speaking of the pulpit oratory of the day, said that it appeared to be the opinion of many of his brethren that evil was to be taken out of his hearers as Eve was taken out of Adam, by first putting them "into a deep sleep." A Scotch minister once said to a member of his congregation, who was in the habit of going to sleep under his sermons, "You had better tak some snuff." "Don't you think," replied the old lady, "it would be better if ye put some snuff into your sermons?" "At Antwerp Fair," says a popular

preacher, "among many curiosities advertised by large paintings and big drums, I observed a booth containing 'a great wonder' to be seen for a penny a head: it was a petrified man. I did not expend the amount required for admission, for I had seen so many petrified men for nothing, both in and out of the pulpit—lifeless, careless, destitute of common sense, and altogether inert, though occupied with the weightiest business which man could undertake."

"The Christian minister should be very cheerful," says the same writer. "I don't believe in going about like certain monks I saw in Rome, who salute each other in sepulchral tones, and convey the pleasant information, 'Brother, we must die;" to which lively salutation each lively brother of the Order replies, 'Yes, brother, we must die.' I was glad to be assured upon such good authority that all these lazy fellows are about to die; but till that event occurs, they might use some more comfortable form of salutation. No doubt there are some people who will be impressed by the very solemn appearance of ministers. I have heard of one who felt convinced that there must be something in the Roman Catholic religion, from the extremely starved and pinched appearance of a certain ecclesiastic. 'Look,' said he, 'how the man is worn to a skeleton by his daily fastings and nightly vigils! How he must mortify his flesh!' Now the probabilities are that the emaciated priest was labouring under some internal disease, which he would have been heartily glad to have got rid of; and it was not conquest of appetite, but failure in

digestion, which had so reduced him; or, possibly a troubled conscience, which made him fret himself down to the light weights. Certainly, I have never met with a text which mentions prominence of bone as an evidence of grace. If so, 'The Living Skeleton' should have been exhibited, not merely as a natural curiosity, but as the standard of virtue. Some of the biggest rogues in the world have been mortified in appearance, as if they lived on locusts and wild honey. It is a very vulgar error to suppose that a melancholy countenance is the index to a gracious heart."

"Without assenting to all that is said about the dulness of the modern pulpit, it might be well to inquire whether it does not admit much greater sprightliness, variety, and force than generally obtain. The range of subjects varies from the heights of heaven to the depths of hell, but are they not all too nearly levelled by the uniform style of our treatment? During the week many of our people, by hearing or reading other topics, range through the calm and the fervid, the plain and the ornate, the argumentative and the declamatory, the simple narrative and the highly picturesque: can it be well that the pulpit should make a monoply of sameness?" *

A lady who had taken Robert Hall to hear her favourite preacher, asked him, on their return home from the service, if he did not think the sermon a very beautiful one. "It might be beautiful, but it certainly was not useful," was the reply. "Why not?"

* Dr. Harris's Address at Congregational Union.

"Because it had no hooks in it, madam! Sermons, to be useful, must have hooks in them." Witty sayings are often as hooks.

The celebrated John Angel James, though generally exceedingly grave in his address, knew the advantages of a pungent and striking style. Addressing the students of Spring-hill College, at one of their anniversaries, he urged them to preach in a good Saxon style, adapted to the wants and feelings of the common people, and used the following "hooks" as his divisions: "To be useful preachers," said he, "you need three qualifications:—1st., Brains, to take in and receive all the Latin, Greek, and logic your professors can give. 2nd., Bowels, for intellectual power without pathos and tenderness in preaching will not succeed. 3rd., Bellows. Get out of doors in the summer months and give free play to your lungs in the open air. Give full exercise to your breathing apparatus by frequent platform and pulpit exercises."

"It is singular that so rich as our language is in humour, it has so seldom been employed in the pulpit. Nay, it has become so rare that it has also become distasteful; and he who uses it has to calculate on a fair share of unpopularity with his brethren in the ministry for his condescension to the popular infirmity of a smile, even if he stop short by many degrees of the more flagrant heresy of a laugh. And yet the minister may be sure that his successful speech will greatly depend upon his ability to use this; for it is humour which is the great detective in character—it distinguishes

the shades of minds, and hearty humour also has a keen eye for the frailties and failings, the sins and infirmities, the lesser or the larger sorrows, and the lighter or the weightier joys of the whole human family. I have often said that a man may as well preach without humanity as without humour; but then perhaps most men do preach without humanity—they find their truth, and dissect off all its human relations, and hold it up, a mere piece of curious osteology to the eye." *

Not unfrequently a bantering attack has lost its force and been silenced by a reply made in a good-natured and humorous spirit, as in the following cases:—An old lady hearing that her foreman had become a local preacher among the Methodists, said, "Well, John, hast thou become a preacher? Thee'lt never sound the trumpet in Zion. Thee'lt never be anything but a ram's-horn preacher." "Well, Mrs.," said John, "I may be a ram's-horn preacher, but it was the ram's horns that brought down the walls of Jericho."

A gay young spark of a deistical turn, travelling in a stage-coach to London, forced his sentiments on the company, by attempting to ridicule the Scriptures; and among other topics, made himself merry with the story of David and Goliah, strongly urging the impossibility of a youth like David being able to throw a stone with sufficient force to sink into the giant's forehead. On this he applied to the company, and in particular to a grave gentleman of the denomination called Quakers, who sat silent in one corner of the carriage. "Indeed,

* "Lamps, Pitchers, and Trumpets."

friend," replied he, "I do not think it at all improbable if the Philistine's head was as soft as thine." This grave rebuke reduced the young man to silence.

"One day," says a clergyman, "I was riding on an omnibus, and the conductor did not know how to conduct himself. Looking down upon a woman who was not particularly handsome, he said to her, 'You are very brown.' I thought she would turn red, but she simply smiled and said, 'It's a good wearing colour.'"

Numerous stories are told of witty rebukes to sleepers in church, but one of the most amusing is related by Dean Ramsey, administered by a Scottish clergyman to his own wife. He had observed one of his flock asleep during his sermon. He paused and called him to order. 'Jeems Robson, ye are sleepin'; I insist on your waking when God's word is preached to ye." "Weel, sir, ye may look at your ain seat, and ye'el see a sleeper forbye me," answered Jeems, pointing to the clergyman's lady in the minister's pew. "Then, Jeems," said the minister, "when ye see my wife asleep again, haud up your hand." By-and-bye, the arm was stretched out, and sure enough the fair lady was caught in the act. Her husband solemnly called upon her to stand up and receive the censure due to her offence. He thus addressed her: "Mrs. B., anybody kens that when I got ye for my wife I got nae beauty; yer friens' ken that I got nae siller; and if I dinna get God's grace, I shall have a poor bargain indeed."

Next to sleeping in church, the practice of going out before the conclusion of the service is a very reprehensible

one. A congregation in America, guilty of this, was on one occasion smartly reproved by Mr. Moody, who when on a journey in the western part of Massachusetts called on a brother in the ministry on a Saturday, thinking to spend the Sabbath with him, if agreeable. The man appeared very glad to see him, and said:—"I should be very glad to have you stop and preach for me to-morrow, but I feel ashamed to ask you." "What is the matter?" asked Moody. "Why, our people have got into such a habit of going out before the meeting is closed, that it seems to be an imposition on a stranger." "If that is all, I must and will stop and preach for you," was Moody's reply. When the Sabbath day came, and Mr. Moody had opened the meeting, and named his text, he looked around on the assembly and said:—"My hearers, I am going to speak to two sorts of folks to-day—saints and sinners! Sinners! I am going to give you your portion first, and would have you give good attention." When he had preached to them as long as he thought best, he paused and said: "There, sinners, I have done with you now; you may take your hats, and go out of the meeting house as soon as you please." But all tarried and heard him through.

Humour has frequently enabled persons to get out of a difficulty when asked to give advice. Here is an example: A lady went to consult a certain Bishop of Amiens, who had the reputation of being a saint and yet possessed a good deal of wit. She wished to know if she might not wear rouge: she had asked several

fathers, but some were so severe and some so relax, that she had come to the Bishop with the hope that he would settle the matter for her. "I see, madam," he replied, "how the case stands. I myself love a medium course, and therefore I permit you to wear rouge—on one cheek only."

Many times persons have succeeded by a stroke of humour when they would not have done so by any other means. For instance, it seems almost impossible for any one, however bold, to recommend himself as suitable for a bishopric, and yet this was done by a Dr. Mountain in the following humorous manner. A bishopric being vacant, the King, who was intimate with the Doctor, said, "Well, Dr. Mountain, who do you think would be the most suitable person for the vacant see?" The reply was, "If your Majesty had but faith as a grain of mustard seed you might say unto this mountain, be thou removed unto the see, and it would be done."

Fully as witty, if not quite so vain, was the following answer to a royal dispenser of church preferments. Charles II., playing at tennis with a Dean who struck the ball well, said, "That's a good stroke for a Dean." "I'll give it the stroke of a Bishop, if Your Majesty pleases," was the suggestive rejoinder.

We do not know whether the Dean got his bishopric or not, but the following anecdote furnishes us with an example of a clever pun being liberally rewarded: Sir Wm. Davies, Archbishop of York, was very fond of a pun. His clergy dining with him for the first time after

he had lost his lady, he told them he feared they did not find things in so good order as they used to be in the time of poor Mary; and looking extremely sorrowful, added, with a deep sigh, "She was, indeed, *mare pacificum*." A curate, who pretty well knew what she had been, called out: "Aye, my Lord, but she was *mare mortuum* first." Sir William gave him a living of £500 per annum within two months afterwards.

The following clever reminder deserved to be rewarded. A curate named Joseph was by permission of Swift allowed to preach before Butler, Duke of Ormond, who it seems had promised him preferment, but had failed to fulfil his promise. He chose for his text the significant passage, "Yet did not the chief Butler remember Joseph, but forgot him."

While on the subject of the choice of texts we are reminded of the following story. When Mr. Whitbread and Howard the philanthropist were candidates for the representation of that town, in opposition to a Mr. Wm. Wake and a Mr. Sparrow, a clergyman of the Established Church at Bradford preached from the text, "Are not two sparrows sold for one farthing;" and looking at the other candidates added, "fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."

Southey, in his "Common-place Book," mentions a case where the adroit choice of a text was eminently successful. It was the custom at Cambridge for the students to express their dislike to a preacher by scraping their feet. On the occasion referred to, Dr. James Scott, being one day saluted thus, signified his intention

of preaching against the practice of scraping; and very shortly afterwards took for his text, "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they consider not that they do evil." On its announcement the galleries became one scene of confusion and uproar; but Dr. Scott called to the proctors to preserve silence. This being effected, he delivered a discourse so eloquent as to extort universal approbation.

Some years ago a Baptist minister in the South of England was exceedingly annoyed by the unfavourable criticism passed upon his pulpit deliverances by two or three members of his congregation, as they chatted together at the village ale-house. One Sabbath, seeing them in their accustomed places, he announced for his text, "I was the song of the drunkard," and proceeded to "offer" such uncomplimentary remarks that they left the chapel before the conclusion of the sermon. A few weeks passed away before they were all present again, but at length they were once more assembled, when to their consternation the minister announced, by way of text, the passage, "And being convicted by their own consciences they went out one by one." Of course they were obliged to sit out the sermon, however unpleasant it might be to do so.

But perhaps the most telling selection of a text was that of a Transatlantic divine, who was dreadfully annoyed by the persistency with which a young man insisted upon offering his unwelcome and oft-rebuked attentions to his daughter. Seeing him one Sabbath sit

down in the very pew she occupied, with a look of bold defiance upon his face, the injured parent announced with a look at the intruder which it is impossible to describe, the following text: "My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil."

The stories told of the humorous rebukes administered to the niggardly and parsimonious are innumerable. We content ourselves, however, with quoting the following, which we fancy is not very generally known: A clergyman in Essex, who had long farmed his tithes alternately among his parishioners, suspecting they robbed him, determined to receive his dues in kind. These gentlemen sent to the parson to take away his hay the moment it was cut down, alleging that as soon as it was cut into swathes it was no longer grass, and that he might turn it and cock it himself. Rather than "go to law" the parson submitted, and took his next Sunday's text on brotherly kindness, beginning thus: "Brotherly love may be divided into three parts—domestic affection, social love, and charity; from all which proper inferences may be drawn for instruction. Thus, brethren, I give you a sermon in swathes—ye may turn it and cock it yourselves!" The plan succeeded; his parishioners doubled his income, acknowledging it was then less than it should be; and thus what justice and law might have kept from him for years was given up for a clerical joke.

We have said enough we hope to make it evident that there is a species of humour, the use of which, both in the pulpit and out of it, is justified by the faculty to

employ it, and by the fact that it has been employed by many ministers with considerable effect. Of course we are aware that this faculty, like every other, may be perverted or misemployed, but what Thackeray says of the humorous writer may be applied to the humorous preacher or public speaker: "The humorous or witty writer proposes to awaken and direct your love of truth, your pity, your kindness; your scorn for untruth, pretence, imposture; your tenderness for the weak, the oppressed, and the unhappy. He comments on almost all the ordinary actions and passions of life."

"Wit," says Barrow, "is properly employed when it enlightens the intellect by good sense conveyed in jocular expression; when it infringes neither on religion, charity, justice nor peace; when it maintains good humour, sweetens conversations, and makes the endearments of society more captivating; when it exposes what is vile and base to contempt; when it reclaims the vicious and laughs them into virtue; when it answers what is below refutation; when it replies to obloquy; when it counterbalances the fashion of error and vice, playing off their own weapons of ridicule upon them; when it adorns truth; when it follows great examples; when it is not used upon subjects improper to it, or in a manner unbecoming, at an undue season, or to a dangerous end."

In the following chapters we propose to furnish evidence and illustrations of its having been thus employed.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY ENGLISH HUMORISTS.

THOUGH we possess abundant evidence that our Saxon ancestors abounded in humour, and indulged in boisterous merriment, we have but scanty memorials of the existence of religious humorists among them. The most ancient writings of the monks and other ecclesiastics which have come down to us abound in legends of saints, allegories, and fables. A few rude songs, containing satires upon the priesthood, have been preserved. These satires were directed principally against the luxury of the monks, and were mostly written during the thirteenth century in a mixture of Saxon and Norman.

One of the earliest specimens of the "humorous parson" we have met with is in the person of NIGELLUS WIREKER, a monk of Canterbury, who lived, it is supposed, in the time of Richard I. He wrote a very amusing poem entitled "The Brunellus," the name of an ass, in which he ridicules the avarice of the monks. Brunellus is dissatisfied because having long ears he

thinks he ought to have a long tail. He betakes himself to Galienus to consult him, who endeavours to dissuade him from adopting any surgical or medical means, and reminds him that if he has a short tail he has a very large head. The following amusing account is given of the prescription Galienus gave to the ass to make his tail grow :—

> "Some marble's fat, and seven-fold furnace shade,
> The offspring of a male and female mule,
> A little of the milk of goose and kite,
> A punch-bowl's racing and a wolf's alarms ;
> Of dog and hare's alliance take a drachm,
> And kisses which the lark gives to the hawk."

The ass begs Galienus to bestow upon him his blessing, which he does with much gravity.

The next is JOHN OF SALISBURY (died 1182). According to the author of the "History of English Humour," he showed the greatest judgment in humour and insight into its nature of any man of his time. His "Polycraticus" is worthy of a religious character. Many of his observations show a taste and knowledge in advance of the age. He notices the force of a jest made by a man who would himself fall under it, as when a pauper laughs at poverty. Well-timed pleasantries he held to be of use in oratory, but he regarded convivial jesting as dangerous, remarks on personal defects as objectionable, and recommended that all jokes should be without bitterness.

Another humorist was WALTER MAPES, a famous writer of Latin verse. He is called by Lord Lyttelton the Anacreon of the twelfth century. He was born on

the borders of Wales before 1150, educated at the University of Paris, and after his return to England became a courtier and a favourite of Henry II., and was made a Canon of St. Paul's and Archdeacon of Oxford in 1196. He seems to have been the first man of note who reconciled divinity with wit. Though accounted a man of pleasure as well as a man of humour, his writings are strongly imbued with religious feelings. He delighted to recount the miracles of saints, and reflected the credulity of the age in which he lived by narrating extraordinary stories of apparitions, and of persons being addressed by them by name and dying shortly afterwards. He wrote the "Mirror of the Church," which is full of violent attacks upon the monastic orders, especially the Cistercian, evidently written in serious indignation, although he indulges in a play upon words. In this he was unlike many writers of his time, who attacked the monks merely to amuse. There is a story of his having been called to see a Cistercian Abbot when dangerously ill, and the Archdeacon recommended him to quit his order and give up avarice and rapacity. The Abbot refused, and even administered to the Archdeacon the rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Shortly afterwards Mapes was taken ill, and the Abbot going to visit him strongly recommended him to renounce his light jesting habits, to give up his pluralities, and take refuge in the bosom of the Cistercian order, at the same time producing a gown and cowl with which he proposed to invest him. Mapes, with characteristic humour, called his servants and told them that if ever in a fit

of sickness he expressed a desire of becoming a monk, they were to consider it a sign that he had lost his senses, and keep him in close confinement. When in Paris he wrote a book called "Metalogicus," exposing the absurd and childish wrangling which then bore the name of logic. Such questions as the following were seriously discussed in learned assemblies: If a man buy a cloak does he also buy the hood? and, If a hog be carried to market with a rope tied round its neck, and held at the other end by the man, is the animal carried to market by the man or the rope?

Though CHAUCER (1328-1400) can scarcely be classed among our religious humorists, he deserves to be mentioned, for he was master of the science of theology as well as the general literature of his time. His writings abound in wit, and his comic vein, like that of Shakespeare, was like one of mercury mingled with a mine of gold. His fame as a humorist rests upon his "Canterbury Tales," which are full of humour, pathos, and shrewd observations. English life in all its varying phases is reflected in them as in a mirror, and they furnish the historian with the most complete picture of the poet's times. "For a hundred beautiful pictures," says William Howitt, "of genuine English existence and English character; for a world of persons and things; for many a tear and emotion revived, and laugh of merriment; for many a happy hour and bright remembrance; we thank thee, Dan. Chaucer: and just thanks shalt thou receive a thousand years hence."

WILLIAM LANGLAND, the author of "Piers Plowman's

Vision," was born in Shropshire about 1300. The work, which is the earliest original poem we possess of any great length, was a severe satire upon the clergy, conceived with real energy, and touching with caustic invective or keen irony public abuses and private vices. Being "a secular priest, and a Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, he had many opportunities of knowing thoroughly those abuses which he lashed with so unsparing a hand. Rich in humour, a quality scarcely known in our earlier literature, it must have been read with great delight by the men of the day when it appeared. Its religious teaching silently prepared the way for the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century, and doubtless expressed the popular sentiments on the subjects it discussed." "The Vision of Piers Plowman" is an allegory, and the general subject of the poem has been described as similar to that of "The Pilgrim's Progress"; but it lacks the "simplicity and dramatic completeness of that matchless work." Still, the gaudy changeful scenes of Vanity Fair are much the same, in spirit at least, on the canvas of Langland as in the later pictures of Bunyan and of Thackeray. Losing no opportunity of tearing the cloak from the ignorant vicious Churchmen of his day, this old poet may be said to have struck the first great blow in the battle of the English Reformation. The poem has scarcely any plan, and indeed, consisting as it does of a succession of pictures, it scarcely needed one, its excellence depending upon its boldness and vigour, upon its humorous vein and bursts of serious feeling.

The poet, while asleep on the Malvern Hills on a May morning, dreams a series of twenty dreams in which he beholds a succession of different orders of the clergy pass before him. Then he perceives a heavenly messenger, the personification of "Holi Chirche," accompanied by a woman whose name is Lucre, who contracts a marriage with Falsehood. Lucre is in "the Pope's palies," and in great favour with the court, and is specially caressed by the friars, whose intrigues are opposed by Conscience. A marriage is proposed by the King between Lucre and Conscience, but the latter objects to the match, and advises the King to dismiss Lucre and rule under the advice of Reason alone. The writer, after several other scenes, shows how he beheld the Castle of Unity, the stronghold of the Church, assailed by an army of priests and monks, who drove out Conscience, the governor of the castle. Conscience then goes in search of the Ploughman, when the dreamer awakes. The "Vision" was followed by "Pier's Ploughman's Crede," a poem full of humour, and representing the difficulties of a plain man who wishes to know how he is to follow Christ, and who betakes himself to the friars for information on the subject. He finds, however, that each order thinks of little beyond railing against some other. One friar he met with he describes as :—

> **"A great chorl, and a grym,**
> **With a face so fat as a full bleddere."**

Another clerical wit was JOHN SKELTON (1460-1529), who for some time was tutor to Henry VIII. when

Prince of Wales, and afterwards Rector of Diss in Norfolk, until suspended through the enmity of the Dominicans, whose anger he incurred by the severe manner in which he satirized their vices. He afterwards wrote a severe attack upon Cardinal Wolsey, which is one of his cleverest satires. It is entitled, "Why come ye not to Courte?" Its tone may be gathered from the following specimen :—

"God save his noble grace
And grant him a place
Endless to dwell
Weh the devyll of hell,
For an he were there
We nede never feere
Of the fendys blake ;
For I undertake
He wolde so brag and quake,
That he wolde then make
The devylls to quake."

This attack so enraged Wolsey that he ordered Skelton to be arrested, but the poet took refuge in the Sanctuary at Westminster, where he died in 1529. Erasmus, speaking of Skelton, styled him "the light and grace of British scholars." His pictures of low life are exceedingly humorous but frequently coarse ; but had he not written for the coarsest palates he could not, as Southey observes, have poured forth his bitter and undaunted satires at such perilous times.

Sir Thomas More (1480-1535), though a layman, deserves to be classed amongst our religious humorists. Collett, speaking of his times, says "There was but one wit in England, and that was young Thomas More."

In 1497, while at Oxford, he formed a lasting friendship with Erasmus. After studying law for some years he received the office of Judge of the Sheriff's Court in London. Soon afterwards he was knighted, made a Privy Councillor, and ultimately became Lord Chancellor. He was many years a great favourite with Henry VIII., but when that monarch decided to seek a divorce from Catherine, More offered the most resolute opposition to the step, and returned the Great Seal rather than sanction the King's marriage with Anne Boleyn. On his refusal to take an oath acknowledging the King's supremacy as Head of the Church of England, he was committed to the Tower, where he remained thirteen months. Soon afterwards he was tried, most unjustly condemned, and was beheaded July 6th, 1535. "He was a man," says Burnet "of rare virtues and excellent parts," and was famous for enlivening his discourses with wit and pleasantry. "His writings," says Bishop Hurd, "are esteemed the most elegant and masterly of any age." The innocent mirth which was conspicuous in his life did not forsake him at the last. As he climbed the crazy timbers where he was to die he said to the lieutenant, "I pray you see me safely up; and for my coming down let me shift for myself;" and when he laid his head on the block, he desired the executioner to wait until he had removed his beard, for that "had never offended against His Highness." Except in his opposition to and persecution of Protestants his conduct "as nearly attained perfection as is allowed to mortals below." "The terseness and liveliness of his sayings,

his sweet temper and affectionate disposition, his blameless life, his learning and probity, combine to make a union of perfect simplicity with moral and intellectual greatness which will for ever endear his memory to his countrymen of every sect and party." The following specimens of his humour are selected from a large number we had marked. Speaking of one who had allowed the hair of his once shaven crown to grow again and "hange over hys eyen," he says "He has as much shame in hys face as a shotten herynge (herring) hath shrymps in her tayle." Writing of the objections made against the circulation of the Bible amongst the common people, he says "Some of the clergy are in doubt to suffer it, because so many of the worst sort are more fervent in the calling for it, than those whom we find far better. Which maketh them to fear that such men desire it for no good, &c. Which fear I promise you nothing feareth me. . . For else if the abuse of a good thing should cause the taking away thereof from other that would use it well, Christ should himself never been born, nor brought his faith into the world, nor God should never have made it neither, if he should for the loss of those that would be lost wretches, have kept away the occasion of reward from them that would with the help of his grace, endeavour them to deserve it." He wrote an amusing account of "How women are punished in purgatory for excess in dress." It seems he carried this dislike to unnecessary expense in this particular into practice, for we are told that when his daughter-in-law had frequently requested him "to buy

her a billiment sett with pearles, he had often put her off, with many pretty slights; but at last, for her importunity, he provided her one. Instead of pearles. he caused white pease to be sett, so at his next coming home his daughter demanded her jewel. Ay, marry, daughter, I have not forgotten thee. So out of his studie he sent for a box, and somenlye delivered it to her. When she with great joy looked for her billiment, she found, far from her expectation, a billiment of pease; and so she allmost wept for verie griefe. But her father gave her so good a lesson, that never after had she any great desire to weare anie new toye." He tells with evident glee the following story. "At Beverley late much of the people being at a bear-baiting, the church fell sodenly doun at evensong-time, and overwhelmed some that were in it. A good fellow that after heard the tale told: 'So,' quod he, 'now you may see what it is to be at evensong when you should be at the bear-baiting.'" Speaking of a preacher, he says, "He can so roll in his rhetorick that he knoweth not what his own words mean." It is to be feared there are some like him in our times. More, while Lord Chancellor, despatched more causes in shorter space than were wont to be in many years before or since. "For once he sat when there was no man or matter to be heard. This he caused to be enrolled in public acts of court. It is strange to them that know there have been causes there depending some dozen years. And there be so many things there heard that it will be a rare

thing to hear the like again." It was to this singular fact that the following verse refers :—

> "When More some time had Chancellor been,
> No *more* suits did remain ;
> The same shall never *more* be seen
> Till *More* be there again.

Another lay humorist who flourished at this time was Sir David Lindsay, a name which has been cherished by the Scotch with peculiar affection. "He was esteemed," says Dr. M'Crie, "as one of the first poets of the age, and his writings contributed greatly to the advancement of the Reformation." That this was the case is evident from the following fact. About the middle of the 16th century a friar was preaching at Perth, and during the course of his sermon, after relating some of the miracles which had been wrought at the shrines of the saints, he began to inveigh bitterly against the Lutheran preachers who were going about the country and endeavouring to withdraw the people from the Catholic faith. When he was in the midst of his invective a loud hissing arose in that part of the church where the boys, to the number of three hundred, were seated, so that the friar, abashed and affrighted, broke off his discourse and fled from the pulpit. A complaint having been made to the Master, he instituted an inquiry into the cause of the disturbance, and to his astonishment found that it originated with the son of a craftsman in the town, who had a copy of Lindsay's "Monarchies," which he had read at intervals to his schoolfellows. When the master was about to administer

severe chastisement to him, both for the tumult he had occasioned and also for retaining in his possession such a heretical book, the boy very spiritedly replied that the book was not heretical, requested his master to read it, and professed his readiness to submit to punishment provided any heresy was found in it. This proposal appeared so reasonable to Simpson that he perused the work, which he had not formerly seen, and was convinced of the truth of the boy's statement. He accordingly made the best excuse which he could to the magistrates for the behaviour of his scholars, and advised the friar to abstain in future from extolling miracles, and from abusing the Protestant preachers. From that time Simpson was friendly to the Reformation. Lindsay was born about 1490, and studied at the University of St. Andrew's from 1505 till 1509. On his return from Italy, which he appears to have visited in 1510, he was appointed keeper or usher of the infant prince, then only a twelve-month old, and who afterwards became James V. About 1530 he was knighted and promoted to the office of Lion King at Arms, in which capacity he accompanied embassies to the Courts of England, France, Spain, and Denmark. He appears to have represented Cupar in the Parliaments of 1542 and 1543. He died 1555. He was a strong supporter of the Reformation, and was present at St. Andrew's in 1547 when the followers of the reformed faith called Knox to take upon himself the office of a public preacher. Pinkerton says "He prepared the ground and John Knox only sowed the seed." The following account of

his writings and character is abridged from "Chambers's Cyclopædia": "For nearly two years he was, what Burns has since become, the poet of the Scottish people. His works were in almost every house, his verses on almost every tongue. . . Their fancy is scarcely less genial than their humour, and they are full of good sense, varied learning, and knowledge of the world. They are valuable now, if for nothing else than their vivid pictures of manners and feelings. In the poet's own day they served a noble purpose by preparing the way for the great revolution of the 16th century." The following lines on "The Exactions of the Law" are taken from his satire of the "Three Estates." We have slightly modernised the spelling:—

"I lent my gossop my meir to fetch hame coals
And he her drown'd in the quarry holes;
And I ran to the Consistory to complane,
And there I happened among greedy men.
They gave me first ane thing they call *citandum*,
Which aucht days I gat but *libellandum*;
Within ane month I gat *ad opponendum*;
In ane half year I gat *inter loquendum*;
An since I gat—how call ye it?—*ad replicandum*;
But, I could never ane word yet understand him.
And then they gart me cast out mony placks,*
And gart me pay for four and twenty acts;
But or they came half way to *concludendum*,
The fiend a plack was left for to defend him.
Thus they postpon'd me twa year, with their train,
Syne, *hodie ad octo*, bade me come again.
And then thie rooks they roupit wonder fast†
For sentence silver they cryit at the last.
Of *pronunciandum*, they made me wonder fain;
But I gat ne'er my gude grey meir again."

* One third of a penny. † Chattered very fast.

We had marked several passages as specimens of his humour, but must content ourselves with the following example of the manner in which he lashed the vices of the clergy, who were "lyke the dogges, that Esayas says,

> **"Can nocht bark**
> **That callit ar preistis, and cannocht preche,**
> **Nor Christis law to the pepill teche;"**

one of whom he makes to speak as follows:—

> **"Thocht I preich nocht, I can play at the caidie;***
> **I wat there is nocht ane amang you all,**
> **Mair feryle can play at the fute-ball;**
> **And for the cartis, the tabils and the dyse,**
> **Above all parsouns I may beir the pryse.**
> **Our round bonnets, we mak them now four nuikit†**
> **Of richt fine stuff, gif now list, come and luikit."**

In the same year as that in which Lindsay was born, another celebrated man first saw the light, HUGH LATIMER. Such, however, was the greatness of his character and influence that we must give him a chapter to himself.

* Kind of blind-man's buff. † Cornered.

CHAPTER III.

Hugh Latimer (1490-1555).

IN the list of England's worthies none deserve a higher place than Hugh Latimer. A true Reformer, he fought manfully for the rights of conscience and the purity of the faith, maintaining his principles and holding fast his integrity in sunshine and in storm, amid evil and good report; and eventually sealed his testimony to the truth with his blood, declaring his belief that that truth, though then persecuted and depressed, would ultimately triumph. "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as shall never be put out."

Latimer's character presents a combination of many noble qualities. He was brave, honest, devoted and energetic; homely and popular, yet free from all violence; a martyr and hero, yet a plain simple-hearted and unpretending man. Humour and cheerfulness, manly sense and direct evangelic fervour, distinguished his sermons and his life, and make them alike interesting and admirable. He was born in 1490 or 1491 at

Thurcaster in Leicestershire, where his father was a substantial yeoman. Here he learned to speak his mother tongue in broad accent and home-spun idiom: no small element in his success as a preacher in after days, when he expounded the doctrines of the gospel in the language then used at fair and market, and enlivened it with images drawn from the every-day experience of humble hard-faring peasants or artisans. On this account he acquired the name of "Father Latimer" among the crowds of London, who flocked to hear him preach, and quoted his racy sayings or pleasant conceits under the arcades of the Exchange, the gilded ceilings of Greenwich Palace, in Southwark hostelries, or Cheapside booths. At the same time his powerful and eloquent delivery secured him hearers and admirers among the courtiers of Henry VIII., while the boldness and courage with which he defended his opinions pleased even that fastidious monarch himself, for whatever were Henry's faults he never objected to honest plain-dealing, and Latimer never shrunk from reproving what he considered to be wrong.

There is an amusing reference to the manner in which he was favoured by the King in his "Third Sermon preached before Edward VI." "In the king's days that dead is a many of us were called together before him to say our minds on certain matters. In the end, one kneeleth me down, and accuseth me of sedition, that I had preached seditious doctrine. The King turned to me and said, 'What say ye of that, sir?' Then I kneeled down, and turned me first to mine

accuser, and required him 'Sir, what form of preaching would you appoint me to preach before a king? Would you have me for to preach nothing as concerning a king in a king's sermon? Have you any commission to appoint me what I shall preach?' Besides this, I asked him divers other questions, and he would make no answer to none of them all: he had nothing to say. Then I turned me to His Grace, and said, 'I never thought myself worthy, nor I never sued to be a preacher before Your Grace, but I was called to it, and would be willing, if you mislike me, to give place to my betters. But if Your Grace allow me for a preacher, I would desire Your Grace to give me leave to discharge my conscience; give me leave to frame my doctrine according to my audience: I had been a very dolt to have preached so at the borders of your realm as I preach before Your Grace.' The King smiled and turned into another communication."

Replying to the assertion that because he had preached against covetousness, and a rebellion had broken out in the following summer, his preaching was the cause of the rebellion, he relates the following humorous story:—"And here by the way I will tell you a merry toy. Master More was once sent in commission into Kent to try out, if it might be, what was the cause of Goodwin Sands, and the shelf that stopped up Sandwich Haven. Thither cometh Master More, and calleth before him such as were thought to be men of experience, and that could of likelihood best certify him of that matter concerning the stoppage of Sandwich

Haven. Among others came in before him an old man with a white head, and one that was thought to be little less than an hundred years old. When Master More saw this aged man, he thought it expedient to hear him say his mind in this matter; for, being so old a man, it was likely that he knew most of any man in that presence and company. So Master More called this old man unto him, and said, 'Father, tell me if you can, what is the cause of this great arising of the sands here about this haven. I see ye are the eldest man that I can espy in all this company, so that if any man can tell any cause of it, ye of likelihood can say most in it.' 'Yea, forsooth, good master,' quoth this old man, 'for I am well nigh an hundred years old, and no man here in this company anything like mine age.' 'Well then,' quoth Master More, 'how say you in this matter? What think ye be the cause of these shelves and flats that stop up Sandwich Haven?' 'Forsooth, sir,' quoth he, 'I am an old man; I think that Tenterton steeple is the cause of Goodwin Sands: for I am an old man, sir, and I may remember the building of Tenterton steeple; and I may remember when there was no steeple at all there. And before that Tenterton steeple was in building, there was no manner of speaking of any flats or sands that stopped the haven: and therefore I think that Tenterton steeple is the cause of the destroying and decay of Sandwich Haven.' And, even so, to my purpose, is preaching of God's word the cause of rebellion, as Tenterton steeple was cause Sandwich Haven is destroyed."

He was as honest and fearless in denouncing the worldliness and idleness of the clergy as he was in reproving the remissness of the King. Here is a specimen: "I heard of a Bishop that went on visitation, and as it was the custom when the Bishop should come, and be rung into town, the great bell's clapper was fallen down, the tyall was broken, so that the Bishop could not be rung into the town. There was a great matter made of this, and the chief of the parish were given to understand by the Bishop that he was much offended. They excused themselves as well as they could. Among the other, there was one wiser than the rest, and he comes me to the Bishop: 'Why my lord,' saith he, 'doth your lordship make so great a matter of the bell that lacketh his clapper? Here is a bell,' said he, and pointed to the pulpit, 'that hath lacked a clapper this twenty years. We have a parson that fetcheth out of this benefice fifty pounds every year, but we never see him.' I warrant you, the Bishop was an unpreaching prelate. He could find fault with the bell that wanted a clapper to ring him into town, but he could not find fault with the parson that preached not at his benefice."

Such plain speaking, however, created him numerous enemies, who endeavoured to prejudice the King's mind against him, though in vain. When, however, in 1539, Gardiner and other Popish ecclesiastics persuaded the King to pass the "Act of Six Articles," which "restored some of the leading points of Popery, Latimer's conscience would not allow him to retain his office.

He resolved to wash his hands of the guilt of it, and resign his bishopric. This led to his being imprisoned in the Tower, and although the King would not allow his enemies to proceed to extremities he was kept a prisoner until the accession of the youthful Edward opened the Tower gates to Latimer, and with it a new career of usefulness lay before him, on which he entered with characteristic ardour. He might have been restored to his diocese, but he chose rather to remain a simple evangelist, living chiefly in London with his friend Cranmer, at Lambeth. The boys in the streets would follow 'Old Father Latimer' with good wishes, when he was seen walking abroad with his well-worn Bible in his hand. The citizens thronged to hear their favourite preacher when it was known he would mount the pulpit at Paul's Cross, or in the 'Shrouds,' a kind of arcade running along one side of the Cathedral, where there was shelter for an audience in inclement weather. Many of his printed sermons were preached at Westminster before the King, the pulpit being set up in the garden in front of the palace windows, and men of all ranks crowded together in the open lawn and alleys round. He used great plainness of speech; and when the people heard him in their own tongue, 'they gave the more silence.' His quips, and witticisms, and rough unpolished phrases, may seem uncouth and startling, but they were the most effective weapons with which the dominant superstition was assailed—so many stones slung into the forehead of the giant cased in brass. These were days when men were terribly in earnest.

They fought with the first weapon that came to hand—with the ox-goad if there was no sword, as Blunt says of Luther; and Latimer, with an implement coarse and heavy as that of Shamgar the son of Anath, smote more Philistines than the regular combatants with the sword and spear."

One of the finest specimens of his preaching is his celebrated "Sermon of the Plough." Our space will not allow us to quote from it extensively, but as it is well-known there is the less necessity for our doing so. The following racy passage, however, we cannot omit:—"And now I would ask a strange question: Who is the most diligentest bishop and prelate in all England, that passeth all the rest in doing his office? I can tell, for I know him who it is; I know him well. And will you know who it is? I will tell you: it is the devil. He is the most diligent preacher of all other; he is never out of his diocese; he is never from his cure; ye shall never find him unoccupied; ye shall never find him out of the way; call for him when you will, he is ever at home; he is ever at his plough; no lording nor loitering can hinder him; ye shall never find him idle I warrant you. And his office is to hinder religion, to maintain superstition, to set up idolatry, to teach all kinds of popery. Where the devil is resident and hath his plough going, then away with books, and up with the candles; away with the Bibles, and up with beads; away with the light of the gospel, and up with the light of candles, yea, at noondays. Down with Christ's cross, up with purgatory; away with clothing the naked, the poor and

impotent, up with the decking of images, and gay garnishing of stocks and stones; up with man's traditions and his laws, down with God's traditions and His most holy word. Let all things be done in Latin; there must be nothing but Latin; God's word may in no wise be translated into English. Oh, that our prelates would be as diligent to sow the corn of good doctrine as Satan is to sow cockel and darnel!"

He was very strong in his denunciations of bribery and injustice, his sermons abound with the reproofs he administered to those guilty of these practices. "Wo worth, these," says he, "'they follow bribes,' saith the prophet."

"A good fellow on a time bade another of his friends to breakfast and said, 'If you will come, you shall be welcome; but I tell you aforehand, you shall have but slender fare; one dish and that is all.' 'What is that,' said he? 'A pudding and nothing else.' 'Marry,' said he, 'you cannot please me better; of all meats, that is for mine own tooth; you may draw me round about the town with a pudding.' These bribing magistrates and judges follow gifts faster than the fellow would follow the pudding."

"Cambyses was a great emperor, such another as our master is: he had many lords-deputies, lords-presidents, and lieutenants under him. It is a great while ago since I read the history. It chanced he had under him in one of his dominions a briber, a gift-taker, a gratifier of rich men; he followed gifts as fast as he that followed the pudding; a hand-maker in his office, to make his

son a great man: as the old saying is, 'Happy is the child whose father goeth to the devil.' The cry of the poor widow came to the Emperor's ear, and caused him to flay the judge quick, and laid his skin in his chair of judgment, that all judges that should give judgment afterwards should sit in the same skin. Surely it was a goodly sign, a goodly monument, the sign of the judge's skin. I pray God we may once more see the sign of the skin in England!"

In his fifth sermon before Edward VI. he tells the following story: "There was a patron in England, when it was that he had a benefice fallen into his hand, and a good brother of mine came unto him and brought him thirty apples in a dish, and gave them his man to carry them to his master. It is like he gave one to his man for his labour to make up the game, and so there was thirty-one. This man cometh to his master, and presenteth him with the dish of apples, saying, 'Sir, such a man hath sent you a dish of fruit, and desireth you to be good unto him for such a benefice.' 'Tush, tush,' quoth he, 'this is none apple matter; I will have none of his apples; I have as good as these or as he hath any in mine own orchard.' The man came to the priest again, and told him what his master said. 'Then,' quoth the priest, 'desire him yet to prove one of them for my sake; he shall find them much better than they look for.' He cut one of them and found ten pieces of gold in it. 'Marry,' quoth he, 'this is a good apple.' The priest standing not far off, hearing what the gentleman said, cried out and answered, 'They are

all one apple I warrant you, sir; they grew all on one tree, and have all one taste.' 'Well he is a good fellow, let him have it,' quoth the patron, 'Get you a graft of this tree, and I warrant you it will stand you better stead than all St. Paul's learning."

Though Latimer might be occasionally humorous over the matter, he was at the same time thoroughly indignant, and exclaimed, "I marvel the ground gapes not and devours us: howbeit, we ought not to marvel; surely it is the great lenity of God that suffers it. O Lord, in what a case we are! If the great men in Turkey should use in their religion of Mahomet to sell, as our patrons commonly sell benefices here, it should be taken as an intolerable thing." And yet, intolerable as it is, it is openly tolerated and publicly practised in our midst at this day.

One more instance on the subject of bribes must suffice. "I can tell," says he, "where one slew another in a township, and was attacked for the same: twelve men were impanelled: the man had friends: the Sheriff laboured the bench: the twelve men stuck at it and said, 'Except he would disburse twelve crowns they would find him guilty.' Means were found that the twelve crowns were paid. The quest comes in and says 'Not guilty.' Here was 'Not guilty' for twelve crowns. This is a bearing, and if some of the bench were hanged, they were well served. . . Crowns! if their crowns were shaven to the shoulders they were served well enough."

Nor did he attack the sins of the higher classes only,

but faithfully reproved tricks of the trade prevalent in the city. "I hear how there is a certain cunning come up in the mixing of wares. If the clothmaker's piece be seventeen yards long, he will set him on a rack, and stretch him while he be brought to eighteen yards. When they have brought him to that perfection they have a pretty feat to thick him again. He makes me a powder for it, and plays the poticary; they call it flock-powder; they do so incorporate it to the cloth, that it is wonderful to consider: truly a goodly invention! Oh that so goodly wits should be so ill applied! They may well deceive the people, but they cannot deceive God. They were wont to make beds of flocks, and it was a good bed too: now they have turned their flocks into powder, to play the false thieves with it. The prophet said to the Jews, 'Thy wine is mingled with water;' so might he have said to us of this land, 'Thy cloth is mingled with flock-powder.'"

The following is a specimen of the homely advice he gave to masters. Urging the importance of personally overlooking their affairs if they would have them to prosper, he says:—"There was once a fellow asked a philosopher a question, saying, 'How is a horse made fat?' The philosopher's answer was, 'With his master's eye.' Not meaning that the horse should be fed with his master's eye, but that the master should oversee the horse, and take heed to the horse-keeper, that the horse might be well fed. For when a man rideth by the way, and cometh to his inn, and giveth unto the hostler his horse to walk, and so he himself sitteth at the table and

maketh good cheer, and forgetteth his horse; the hostler cometh and saith, 'Sir, how much bread shall I give unto your horse?' He saith, 'Give him two-pennyworth.' I warrant you this horse shall never be fat. Therefore a man should not say to the hostler, 'Go give him,' but he should see himself that the horse have it. In like manner, those that have servants must not only command them what they shall do, but they must see that it be done."

He tells of a person who when asked if he had been at the sermon at St. Paul's Cross, answered he was there; and on being questioned "as to what news there?" said, "Marry, wonderful news; we were there clean absolved; my mule and all had full absolution." "Ye may see by this he was such an one as rode on a mule, and that he was a gentleman. Indeed his mule was wiser than he; for I dare say the mule never slandered the preacher. O what an happy chance had this mule to carry such an ass upon his back! I was there at the sermon myself. . . and sure I am the preacher absolved none but such as were sorry and did repent. Belike then she did repent her stumbling: his mule was wiser than he a great deal. I speak not of worldly wisdom, for therein he is too wise; yea, he is so wise, that wise men marvel how he came truly by the tenth part of that he hath: but of wisdom which consisteth in godly matters he is as blind as a beetle; like horses and mules that have no understanding. If it were true that the mule repented her of her stumbling, I think she was better absolved than he. I pray God

stop his mouth, or else to open it to speak better, and more to his glory."

His wit frequently stood him in good stead, and on more than one occasion enabled him to escape the snares that were laid for him. For instance, the Bishop of Ely once came unexpectedly into the church where he was preaching a Latin sermon before the University. Latimer so far from being surprised by the sudden entrance of the Bishop, made a pause until the Bishop and his retinue were quietly placed; and then, with a sudden transition from the subject of which he was speaking, entered on to the duties of the Episcopal order—upon which he discoursed with so much wisdom and eloquence, that the Bishop thanked him afterwards for his sermon, assuring him that he had never before heard his office so well explained, and asked him to grant him one request—"that he would preach him one sermon in that place against Martin Luther and his doctrine." Latimer replied, "My Lord, I am not acquainted with the doctrine of Luther, nor are we permitted here to read his works. And, therefore, it were but a vain thing for me to refute his doctrines, not understanding what he hath written, nor what opinions he holdeth. Sure I am, that I have preached before you this day no man's doctrine, but only the doctrine of God out of the Scriptures. And if Luther do none otherwise than I have done, there needeth no confutation of his doctrine. Otherwise, when I understand he doth teach against the Scripture, I will be ready with all my heart to confound his doctrine, as much as lieth in me." The Bishop could only reply to this, "Well,

well, Mr. Latimer, I perceive that you smell of the pan. You will repent this gear one day."

On another occasion the Bishop called to examine him respecting his belief. Latimer knowing that he was sent to find cause against him, if possible, said to his servant, "Tell him I am ill of the plague," meaning the plague of heresy. This was enough for the would-be inquisitor, for he immediately decamped.

Latimer's character has been most truly described in the following words:—"Possessing a primeval simplicity of character, he forgot not himself amidst the allurements of a court in the day of his prosperity, nor amidst the storms with which the close of his life were overshadowed. An unaffected intrepidity was his uniform characteristic. It was displayed in all his words and actions. Whether we watch his course at the University, where we find him at one time a zealous defender of Popery, at another equally zealous in avowing and defending his change of sentiments in favour of the reformed religion; or whether we look to his ministerial labours—to that uncompromising plainness with which he did the work of an evangelist in the highest station of the Church, as well as in its inferior office, reproving vice in whatever order of men it might be found without partiality or reserve; or lastly, whether we contemplate his cheerful resignation to the will of God through the trying emergencies of his life even to the bitterness of death; we cannot but feel an enthusiastic admiration of that excellent spirit which was in this extraordinary man."

CHAPTER IV.

DONNE, HALL, BURTON, AND FULLER.

WE now introduce the reader to a batch of contemporary clerical humorists. The first is—

Dr. John Donne (1573-1631).

Donne was born in London and educated at Oxford, but owing to his parents being Roman Catholics he was prevented from taking a degree. This probably led him to study for the law, which he commenced to do when seventeen years of age. While so engaged he was led to investigate the points at issue between the Catholics and Protestants, and ultimately threw in his lot with the latter. His ability in church controversy attracted the attention of James I., and he was made chaplain to the King. He became preacher at Lincoln's Inn, and afterwards Dean of St. Paul's.

"Dr. Donne," said Dryden "though not the greatest poet, is the greatest wit of our nation;" while a writer in the *Quarterly Review* asserts that he was "the greatest preacher of the seventeenth century." His poetry abounds

with quaint conceits, but has a rich vein of humour, while some of his pieces, both for thought and melody, are absolute gems. "Melancholy and pleasant humour," says Isaac Walton, "were in him so co-tempered, that each gave advantage to the other, and made his company one of the delights of mankind." His fancy was inimitably high, equalled only by his great wit; both being made useful by a commanding judgment.

While secretary to Lord Ellesmere, the Keeper of the Great Seal, he privately married that nobleman's niece, which so enraged the Keeper that he had Donne imprisoned. On his reaching the prison he wrote to his wife and signed his note. "John Donne, Anne Donne, un-done." He was, however, soon after released, and recovered his wife by legal process.

Speaking of himself he says: "I have lived to be useful and comfortable to my good father-in-law. I have maintained my own mother, whom it hath pleased God after a plentiful fortune in her younger days to bring her to a great decay in her very old age. I have quieted the consciences of many who have groaned under the burden of a wounded spirit, whose prayers I hope are available for me. I cannot plead innocency of life, but I am to be judged by a merciful God."

Mr. Chidley, who was, says Walton, "a frequenter of his sermons," wrote:

> **"He did not banish, but transplanted wit;**
> **Taught it both time and place, and brought it home**
> **To piety, which it doth best become."**

We append the following brief specimens:—He

quotes a saying that "Readers are of four sorts: sponges, which attract all without distinguishing; hour glasses, which receive and pour out as fast; bags, which retain only the dregs of the spices, and let the wine escape; and sieves, which retain the best only." "Pliny names one that spent threescore years in the contemplation of bees: our whole time for this exercise is but threescore minutes, and therefore we say no more on this but *vade ad apem*, practise the sedulity of the bee, labour in thy calling." "Truly wherever we are, if we can but tell ourselves truly what and where we would be, we may make any state and place such: for we are so composed that if abundance or glory scorch or melt us, we have an earthly cave, our bodies, to go into by consideration and cool ourselves; and if we be frozen or contracted with lower and dark fortunes, we have within us a torch, a soul, lighted and warmer than any without. We are therefore our own umbrellas, and our own suns." "The estate which I should leave behind me of any estimation is my poor fame in the memory of my friends; and therefore I would be envious of it, and provide that they repent not to have loved me."

Only a year after the birth of Donne,

JOSEPH HALL

was born at Ashby-de-la Zouch, Leicestershire. He was educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. In 1617, he was made Dean of Worcester, and ten years afterwards Bishop of Exeter. In 1641 he was translated to Norwich. After suffering severe persecution for his opinions he died in 1656 at the age of 82.

When quite a young man he wrote three books of satires, which he entitled "Toothless Satyres, poetical, acedemical, and moral." These were followed by "Byting Satyres," in which he ridicules the effeminacy of the times. These works have secured for him the praise of having been "the earliest English satirist," and perhaps none of our writings of this kind have equalled them in importance. He also wrote, in later years, a number of controversial and devotional books, which acquired considerable popularity, but the satires are still more esteemed than his later works.

Robert Burton

was born at Lindley, in Leicestershire, in 1576, and died in 1640, after having been appointed to the vicarage of St. Thomas, and the rectory of Segrave. His celebrated book, "The Anatomy of Melancholy," was highly popular in his lifetime, after which it fell into comparative oblivion for a time, but is now again popular among lovers of quaint literature. Dr. Johnson said it was the only book that ever took him out of bed two hours before his usual time. Anthony Wood says he was a good mathematician, a dabbler in nativities, a well-read scholar, and a thorough-paced philologist; and declares that "he was by many accounted a severe student, and a melancholy and humorous person, so by others who knew him well, a person of great honesty, plain-dealing and charity. I have heard" says the old gossip, "some of the ancients of Christ's Church often say that his company was very 'merry, facete, and juvenile.'"

But the wit of wits of this period, or perhaps any other, was

THOMAS FULLER, D.D. (1608-1661).

He was born at Aldwinkle, Northamptonshire, where his father was rector. He distinguished himself at Cambridge, where he obtained a fellowship. In 1624 he took the degree of A.B., and that of A.M. in 1628. He stood so high in the estimation of his college that before he was 23 years of age he was appointed to St. Benet's, Cambridge, and acquired great popularity as a preacher. He afterwards became a prebendary of Salisbury. In 1640 he was selected as lecturer at the Savoy Church in the Strand, and removed to London in order to fulfil the duties of his office. The same year he was a member of the Convocation at Westminster, and one of the select committee appointed to draw up new canons for the better government of the Church. In the Civil War he adhered firmly to the royal cause, and was driven from place to place during its reverses. In 1645, however, he was chosen lecturer at St. Clement's, Lombard Street, and afterwards at St. Bride's. About 1648, he was presented to the living of Waltham in Essex, where he continued until 1658, when he became vicar of Crawford, Middlesex. At the Restoration he was reinstated in his prebend of Salisbury, and appointed Chaplain Extraordinary to the King, in obedience to whose mandamus he was created D.D. by the University of Cambridge.

He published numerous works, all abounding with

valuable information, and evincing great industry. The most important of these is his "Worthies of England," which is full of biographical anecdotes, witty remarks, and acute observation of men and manners. Quaint humour is one of Fuller's peculiar characteristics; but his writings are not less remarkable for wisdom, imagination, and, when occasion demands, even for pathos. The most ordinary subject is enlivened by his learned and humorous pen. Thus in his "Bedfordshire," when speaking of larks, he says, "The most and best of these are caught about Dunstable in this shire. A harmless bird when living, not trespassing on grain, and wholesome when dead, then filling the stomach with meat as formerly the ear with music. If men would but imitate the early rising of this bird, it would conduce much unto their healthfulness." Describing the "good wife," he says, "She never crosseth her husband in the spring-tide of his anger, but stays until it be ebbing-water; and then mildly she argues the matter, not so much to condemn him as to acquit herself. Surely men, contrary to iron, are worse to be wrought upon when they are hot, and are far more tractable in cold blood. It is an observation of seamen that if a single meteor or fire-ball falls on their mast, it portends ill-luck; but if two come together (which they count Castor and Pollux) they presage good success. But sure in a family it bodeth most bad when two fire-balls (husband and wife's anger) both come together."

Speaking of children, he states that a man complained that never father had so undutiful a child as he. "Yes,"

said the son, "My grandfather had;" and of husbands, he says, "He knows little who will tell his wife all he knows."

"Next to Shakespeare," says Coleridge, "I am not certain whether Thomas Fuller, beyond all other writers, does not excite in me the sense and emotion of the marvellous—the degree in which any given faculty, or combination of faculties, is possessed and manifested, so far surpassing what one would have thought possible in a single mind as to give one's admiration the flavour and quality of wonder." The same writer expresses his belief that "the exuberance of Fuller's wit has even been the means of defrauding him of his due praise for the practical wisdom of his thoughts; for the beauty and variety of the truths into which he shaped his matter."

He certainly is one of the most original, as well as most eccentric of our literary worthies. "He wrote," says Mr. Rogers, "like Jeremy Taylor and Isaac Barrow and Sir Thomas Brown, with a vigour and freshness, with a fertility of thought and imagery, and a general felicity of style, which, considering the quantity of his compositions and the haste with which he produced them, impress us with wonder as his untiring activity and preternatural fecundity. His quips and quirks, and wanton wiles—his jests, puns, *jeux d'esprit*, and sallies of playful banter—form a perpetual fund of amusement to all readers with a wit to be exercised, and a diaphragm to be tickled. Fuller is one of those *bonâ fide* humorists, almost, if not quite, peculiar to British literature, in whom depth of thought and feeling

underlies a surging tide of fun and frolic." Mr. Rogers, in his essay, regales himself with the fancy of watching the countenance of any intelligent man while perusing Fuller, affirming that few other writers could produce more rapid variations of expression. "We should see the face in succession mantling with a smile, distended into a broad grin, breaking out into loud laughter; now arching the eyebrows to an expression of sudden wonder and pleased surprise; now clouded with a momentary shade of vexation over some wanton spoiling of a fine thought; now quieted again into placidity by the presentation of something wise or striking; and anon chuckling afresh over some outrageous pun or oddity. The same expression could not be maintained for any three paragraphs; perfect gravity scarcely for three sentences." In fact his habit of jesting appears to have been inexpressible. His was a cheery temperament, blithe and boyish, free-spoken but frank-hearted, without a particle of bitterness. With such a temperament, added to unfeigned piety and benevolence; with a heart open to all innocent pleasures, and purged from the leaven of malice and uncharitableness; it was as natural that he should be full of mirth as it is for the grasshopper to chirp, or the bee to hum, or the birds to warble in the spring breeze and the warm sunshine. His very physiognomy is justly noted as an index to his natural character: he had light flaxen hair, clear blue and laughing eyes, and a kindly open visage. If he was apt to make, so he was ready to take a joke; and doubtless laughed with zest over the reputed reply of

Mr. Sparrowhawk, whom he once asked what was the difference between a sparrowhawk and a owl; and who forthwith replied that an owl was *fuller* in the head, and *fuller* in the face, and *fuller* all over.

"The writings of Fuller," says Charles Lamb, "are usually designated with the title of quaint, and with sufficient reason; for such was his natural bias to conceits, that I doubt not, upon most occasions, it would have been going out of his way to have expressed himself out of them." It was as natural for him to be witty as it was to breathe.

Fuller wrote on a great variety of subjects. As time goes on his works are more and more valued. The greatest critics concur in the admiration of his wit and wisdom. It is not, however, for this alone that he is so highly esteemed. His happy, buoyant disposition was accompanied by deep, earnest, and habitual piety, with tolerance and charity, and with the most kindly benevolence. We might fill a volume with specimens of his humour, so inexhaustible is the store. The following are taken almost at random from his various works:—

Pyramids.—"The Pyramids themselves, doting with age, have forgotten the names of their founders."

Virtue in a short person.—"His soul had but a short diocese to visit, and therefore might the better attend the effectual informing thereof."

Intellect in a very tall one.—"Ofttimes such who are built four stories high are observed to have little in their cock-loft."

Naturals.—"Their heads sometimes so little, that there is no room for wit; sometimes so long, that there is no wit for so much room."

Elder Brother.—"Is one who made haste to come into the world to bring his parents the first news of male posterity, and is well rewarded for his tidings."

Infants.—"Some, admiring what motives to mirth infants meet with in their silent and solitary smiles, have resolved, how truly I know not, that then they converse with Angels; as, indeed, such cannot, amongst mortals, find any fitter companions."

Fancy.—"It is the most boundless and restless faculty of the soul; for while the Understanding and the Will are kept, as it were, in *libera custodia* to their objects of *verum et bonum*, the Fancy is free from all engagements: it digs without spade, sails without ship, flies without wings, builds without charges, fights without bloodshed; in a moment striding from the centre to the circumference of the world; by a kind of omnipotency creating and annihilating things in an instant; and things divorced in Nature are married in Fancy as in a lawless place."

Negroes.—"The image of God cut in ebony."

School-divinity.—"At the first, it will be as welcome to thee as a prison, and their very solutions will seem knots unto thee."

Mr. Perkins, the Divine.—"He had a capacious head, with angles winding and roomy enough to lodge all controversial intricacies."

Judges in capital cases.—"O let him take heed how he strikes, that hath a dead hand."

Memory.—"Philosophers place it in the rear of the head, and it seems the mine of memory lies there, because there men naturally dig for it, scratching it when they are at a loss."

Text of St. Paul.—"St. Paul saith, let not the sun go down on your wrath, to carry news to the antipodes in another world of thy revengeful nature. Yet let us take the Apostle's meaning rather than his words, with all possible speed to depose our passion; not understanding him so literally, that we may take leave to be angry till sunset: then might our wrath lengthen with the days; and men in Greenland, where days last above a quarter of a year, have plentiful scope for revenge."

Bishop Brownrig.—"He carries learning enough *in numerato* about him in his pockets for any discourse, and had much more at home in his chests for any serious dispute."

Modest Want.—"Those that with diligence fight against poverty, tho' neither conquer till death makes it a drawn battle; expect not but prevent their craving of thee: for God forbid the heavens should never rain, till the earth first opens her mouth; seeing some grounds will sooner burn than chap."

Death-bed Temptations.—"The devil is most busy on the last day of his term; and a tenant to be outed cares not what mischief he doth."

The following specimens are from his "Church History":—

"I have read how a Roman orator, making a speech at the funeral of his deceased mother-in-law, affirmed that he had never been reconciled unto her for many years. Now, whilst his ignorant auditors condemned their mutual vindictiveness, the wiser sort admired and commended their peaceable dispositions—because there never happened the least difference between them needing an agreement; as that bone cannot be set which was never broken."

"King Henry had lately set forth a book against Luther. None suspect this King's lack of learning (though many his lack of leisure from his pleasures) for such a design; however, it is probable some other Gardiner gathered the flowers though King Henry had the honour to wear the posy."

"Their heads will catch cold who wait bare for a dead pope's triple crown. Wolsey may be an instance hereof, who, on every avoidance of Peter's chair, was sitting down therein, when suddenly some one clapt in before him!"

Speaking of the "several orders of monks and nuns in England," he says: "What wonder is it if one be lost in a wood, to which their numerous orders may well be represented? though in all this wood there appears not one plant of God's planting, as one of their own abbots most remarkably did observe. In a word, when the frogs of Egypt died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields, they gathered them together upon heaps, &c. And give us leave in like manner confusedly to shovel up these vermin now dead in England."

Speaking of Cardinal Wolsey's dissolving forty houses, he says: "This made all the religious foundations in England to shake, justly fearing the King would finish to fell the oaks, seeing the Cardinal began to cut the underwood."

"There be three degrees of gratitude, according to men's several abilities. The first is to requite—the second to deserve—the third to confess—a benefit received. He is a happy man that can do the first; no honest man that would not do the second; a dishonest man who doeth not the third."

Fuller's claim to be numbered among Biblical scholars, says Dr. W. L. Alexander, rests chiefly on his "Pisgah sight of Palestine." &c. Perhaps no work was ever written on such a subject so sparkling with wit, and so full of quaint and humorous remarks as this; at the same time preserving so much of faithful adherence to the subject of which the author professed to treat. The work is not confined to Biblical topography, but handles many points of history and archæology; it is also illustrated by maps and engravings, which are as quaint in their way as the text they are meant to illustrate.

We append a few extracts taken from the work:—

"Modern authors avouch that malignant spirits haunt the places where the precious metals are found; as if the devil did there sit abrood to hatch them, cunningly pretending an unwillingness to part with them; whereas indeed he gains more by one mine minted out into money than by a thousand concealed in the earth."

The following rebuke is not unseasonable at the present. "A brain-sick opinion hath possessed many English now-a-days, that they are descended from Jewish extraction; and some pretend, to derive their pedigree (but out of what Herald's office I know not) from Jewish parentage. Here a mystical truth may be wrapped up in a literal lie; Old-Jury is a street of large extent; and too much of Jewish blood, spirits, marrow, fill, move, fraught our veins, nerves, bones; pressing God under the weight of our sins, who daily loadeth us with his benefits; who, besides other favours, in the day-time of prosperity is a pillar of a cloud to cool, check and counsel; in the night of adversity a pillar of fire to cheer, comfort, and conduct us; and yet neither effectually work our serious amendment."

"If all conjectural results should be cast out for weeds, few herbs would be left in the gardens of most arts and sciences."

"St. Paul hath a passage: 'We know in part and prophesy in part;' which is a good curb for our curiosity; and the same Apostle hath a precept, 'Prove all things, hold fast that which is good;' which is as good a spur for our diligence."

"If monuments were marshalled according to men's merits, what change would it cause in our churches."

"Oh, if order were observed for every one to mend his own heart or house, how would personal amendment quickly produce family, city, county, kingdom reformation! How soon are those streets made clean where every one sweeps against his own door!"

In his "Holy State," he writes thus:—"Christ reproved the Pharisees for disfiguring their faces with a sad countenance. Fools! who to persuade men that angels lodged in their hearts, hung out the devil for a sign in their faces."

The following anecdotes are told of him. A shoemaker having heard him repeat some witty verses on a scolding wife, was so delighted with them as to request a copy. "There is no necessity for that," said Fuller, "as you have got the original." The members of a committee of sequestrators having heard of Fuller's wonderful memory, questioned him about it. "Gentlemen," said he, "I will give you an instance. Your worships have thought fit to sequestrate an honest but poor parson, my neighbour, and have committed him to prison. He has a great charge of children, and his circumstances are but indifferent. If you please to release him from prison, and restore him to his family, I will never forget it as long as I live." The well-timed jest resulted in the release and restoration of the poor clergyman.

In his "Church History," Fuller relates the following amusing anecdote. Henry VIII., having been hunting in Windsor Forest, and losing himself, at length found himself near Reading Abbey. He applied for admission, and representing himself to be one of the King's Guards, was invited to the Abbot's table. Hungry with continued exercise, he partook so heartily of a huge sirloin of beef as to excite the envy of the Abbot, who exclaimed, "Well fare thy heart, I would give a

hundred pounds if I could feed so heartily upon beef as thou dost. Alas! my weak and squeamish stomach will hardly digest the wing of a fowl or a rabbit;" the monarch having satisfied his palate thanked the Abbot for his good cheer, and departed undiscovered. Some weeks afterwards, the Abbot was arrested, conveyed to London, sent to the Tower, and allowed no food for several days but bread and water. This treatment soon removed the effects of repletion. At last, one day, a sirloin of beef was placed before him, when he ate as freely as a famished ploughman. When he had finished his meal, the King, who had been a hidden spectator, burst from the place of his concealment. "My Lord," said the laughing monarch, "presently deposit your hundred pieces of gold, or else no going hence all the days of your life. I have been the physician to cure your squeamish stomach, and now, as I deserve, I demand my fee for so doing." The Abbot, knowing that argument was of no avail with the stern Henry, paid the money, and returned home rejoicing that he had escaped so easily.

CHAPTER V.

PURITAN HUMORISTS.

ANDREW MARVEL (1620-1678).

MARVEL according to Collier's "History of English Literature," was born in Lincolnshire 1620-21, while Chambers says his birth took place in Hull, Yorks, Nov. 20th, 1620. The latter statement is most likely to be correct, as his father was master of the Grammar School and reader at Trinity Church in that town.* In his fifteenth year he went to Cambridge, and five years afterwards left England for Constantinople, being connected with an embassy to that city. While abroad he visited Italy, where he met with Milton, and a life-long intimacy was begun which was equally honourable to them both. About 1653 he returned, and in 1657 became Milton's assistant in the office of Latin Secretary to Cromwell, and in 1660 was returned member for his native town, which reposed such

*Rogers, in his essay on Marvel in the *Edinburgh Review*, gives Hull as his birthplace.

confidence in him that it re-elected him at every subsequent election as long as he lived, and allowed him a handsome pension, which was of great service to him, as he would otherwise have ofttimes been reduced to want, for notwithstanding the efforts of Charles II. to win him, he steadily refused the bribes which were offered him. He died in 1678, not without suspicion of poison, though the charge could never be substantiated. His native town voted a sum of money for a monument to his memory, but the Court interfered and the project was abandoned. A beautiful marble statue of him, however, was presented to the borough and placed in the new Town-hall, by the late John Winship, Esq.; executed by Mr. Keyworth, another gifted native of Hull.

Marvel's writings were characterised by great vigour, and were full of wit and humour. They soon became very popular. He is said to have been the first to indulge in that sportive raillery which was afterwards carried to such perfection by Addison, Steele, and Arbuthnot. Burnet called him "the liveliest droll of the age who write in a burlesque strain, but with so peculiar and entertaining a conduct that from the king down to the tradesmen his books were read with great pleasure."

He sometimes preached, and in a most effective manner. Old Fuller says "He was a most excellent preacher, who never broached what he had not brewed, but preached what he had pre-studied, insomuch that he was wont to say that he would cross the common

proverb, which called Saturday the working day, and Monday the holiday of preachers."

In 1672 Marvel entered into a controversy with the bitter and bigoted Dr. (afterwards Archbishop) Parker. In 1670 this prelate had published his "Ecclesiastical Polity," in which he advocated the most severe measures against liberty of conscience, asserting that "Princes may with less hazard give liberty to men's vices than to their consciences." Owen answered this work, and Parker replied by a defence which abounded with the most scurrilous abuse, and which, like that of Butler's "Hudibras," was received with uproarious delight by the courtiers. But these worthies had not all the wit on their side, for presently there came forth from the press an answer, bearing the title of "The Rehearsal Transposed," so abounding with humour that it turned the laughers against the conceited priest, who was dreadfully mortified to find himself so severely handled by a layman, who by a judicious use of ridicule accomplished what Owen's ponderous and learned gravity failed to effect.

The following smart and vigorous passage is a fair specimen and style of Marvel's reply:—"The press hath owed him (Parker) a shame a long time, and is now beginning to pay off the debt. The press (that villaneous engine), invented much about the same time with the Reformation, hath done more mischief to the discipline of our Church than the doctrine can make amends for. It was a happy time when all learning was in manuscript, and some little officer, like our

author, did keep the keys of the library. When the clergy needed no more knowledge than to read the liturgy and the laity no more clerkship than to save them from hanging. But now, since printing came into the world, such is the mischief, that a man cannot write a book without being answered. Could the press but once be conjured to obey only an *imprimatur*, our author might not disdaine perhaps to be one of its most zealous patrons. There have been wayes found out to banish ministers; to find out not only the people, but even the grounds and fields where they assembled, in conventicles; but no art yet could prevent these seditious meetings of letters. Two or three brawny fellows in a corner, with meer ink and elbow grease, do more harm than a hundred systematical divines, with their sweaty preaching. . . O, printing! how hast thou disturbed the peace of mankind! that lead when moulded into bullets is not so mortal as when formed into letters! There was a mistake, sure, in the story of Cadmus; and the serpents' teeth which he sowed were nothing else but the letters which he invented."

Burnet, speaking of Marvel's reply, declared that its drollery caused it to be so well received, and its arguments produced such an impression, that it not only humbled Parker but the whole party. It produced such a panic among the defenders of arbitrary power and priestly assumption, as to call forth several replies, amongst which was one by Parker himself, who at first was disposed to remain silent, but at length retorted with his "Reproof to 'the Rehearsal Transposed.'"

Unfortunately he lost his temper and imprudently urged the Government "to crush the pestilent wit, the servant of Cromwell and the friend of Milton." Not content with this he, or some one of his friends, wrote Marvel threatening to "cut his throat," but, far from being intimidated by these threats, Marvel replied in such a vigorous manner that the Archbishop did not venture a second rejoinder. His own friend Anthony Wood says that he "judged it more prudent to lay down the cudgels than to enter the lists again with an untowardly combatant, so largely well-versed in the then newly refined art of sporting and jeering buffoonery." The same writer states that it ever after took down Parker's great spirit.

Marvel justifies the severity of his reply in the following humorous passage:—"No man needs letters marque against one that is an open pirate of other men's credit. I remember within our time one Simons, who robbed always on the bricolle—that is to say never interrupted the passengers, but still set upon the thieves themselves, after, like Sir John Falstaff, they were gorged with a booty; and by this way—so ingenious that it was scarce criminal—he lived secure and unmolested all his days with the reputation of a judge rather than a highwayman."

Marvel wrote several controversial works after his contest with Parker, in one of which he defended the celebrated John Howe from a severe assault on his conciliatory tract on the "Divine Prescience;" and another, "An Account of the Growth of Popery and

Arbitrary Government in England." For the last a reward was offered by the Government for the discovery of the author, though they knew very well who was the writer.

He wrote also several amusing parodies of the King's speeches, in which he ridiculed severely the conduct of both king and courtiers. The following brief specimen relates to the excessive expenditure of the "Merrie Monarch":—"My Lords and Gentlemen,—I told you at our last meeting the winter was the fittest time for business, and truly I thought so, till My Lord Treasurer assured me the spring was the best time for salads and subsidies. I hope, therefore, that April will not prove so unnatural a month, as not to afford some kind showers on my parched exchequer, which gapes for want of them. Some of you, perhaps, will think it dangerous to make me too rich; but I do not fear it; for I promise you faithfully whatever you give me I will always want; and although in other things my word may be thought a slender authority, yet in that you may rely on me, I will never break it."

So much was Marvel's influence feared by the Court that several efforts were made to buy him, but the patriot proved incorruptible. The following statement respecting his refusal of a bribe is taken from a very scarce pamphlet printed about 1754. "His understanding, integrity and spirit were dreadful to the then infamous administration. Persuaded he would be theirs for properly asking, they sent his old school-fellow the Lord Treasurer Danby to renew acquaintance with him.

He found him in a garret, and at parting, out of pure affection, the Treasurer slipped into his hand an order upon the Treasury for £1000, and then went to his chariot. Marvel, looking at the paper, called after the nobleman, saying, 'My Lord, I request another moment.' They went up again to the garret, and Jack, the servant boy, was called. 'Jack, child, what had I for dinner yesterday?' 'Don't you remember, sir? You had the little shoulder of mutton you ordered me to buy from a woman in the market.' 'Very right, child. What have I for dinner to-day?' 'Don't you know, sir, that you bid me lay up the blade-bone to broil.' 'Tis so; very right, child, go away.' 'My Lord, do you hear that? Andrew Marvel's dinner is provided; there's your piece of paper. I want it not. I know the sort of kindness you intend. I live here to serve my constituents: the ministry may seek men for their purpose—I'm not one.'"

Rogers gives a somewhat different, or rather fuller account of the transaction, and states that Marvel had spent an evening at Court, and charmed the merry monarch by his accomplishments and wit. That it was by the King's desire that Danby waited upon the patriot with a special message of regard, and on the Treasurer's declaring that His Majesty was impressed with a deep sense of his merits, Marvel replied "that His Majesty had it not in his power to serve him;" and on his being informed that His Majesty only desired to know whether there was any place at Court he would accept, the patriot declared "that he could accept nothing with

honour; for either he must treat the king with ingratitude, by refusing compliance with Court measures, or be a traitor to his country by yielding to them. The only favour, therefore, he begged of His Majesty was to esteem him as a loyal subject, and truer to his interests in refusing his offers than he could be by accepting them."

Marvel's wit was remarkable. We can scarcely read a page of his writings without being astonished at the fierce invective, grave irony, light raillery, and broad laughing humour with which they abound. "He often positively startles us by the activity with which his mind suggests ludicrous images and analogies, the remoteness and oddity of the sources from which they are supplied, and by the unexpected ingenuity and felicity of the repartees."

Notwithstanding his marvellous power of invective, he is remarkably free from all bitterness and malevolence. "There is not," says Rogers, "a single particle of malignity in all he has written. His general tone is rather that of broad mirthful banter, or of the most cutting invective, but he appears equally devoid of malevolence in both. . . If he carried a keen sword, it was a most peaceful and gentlemanly weapon; it never left the scabbard except on the highest provocation, and even then only on behalf of others. His magnanimity, self-control and good-temper, restrained him from avenging any insult offered to himself: his chivalrous love of justice instantly roused all the lion within him on behalf of the injured and oppressed."

He who supposes Marvel to have been nothing but a wit, simply on account of the predominance of that quality, will do him injustice. It is common to look upon men of his class as possessing much less wisdom than they really do because of their superabundance of wit. Their other qualities are dwarfed by the side of the one in which they most excel, that we do not perceive them so readily, "just as when we gaze on mountain scenery. Fixing our eye on some solitary peak, which towers far above the rest, the groups of surrounding hills look positively diminutive, though they may, in fact, be all of great magnitude." The same remark will apply to several of the humorists sketched in this volume.

Contemporary with Marvel lived

THOMAS ADAMS,

usually called "Puritan Adams," whose works abound with humour and common sense. Very little is known of his early life, but he was public minister in Bedfordshire early in the seventeenth century, and preacher at Paul's Cross in 1612. He resembles in many respects Bishop Hall, whose writings he was fond of quoting, and has been compared with Barrow for the thoroughness with which he exhausts his subjects, and to Jeremy Taylor for the poetic splendour of his imagery. His works have been republished in Nichols' "Series of Puritan Divines," and will well repay perusal. In referring to them for specimens of humour we had marked hundreds of passages in the first volume alone.

Our space, however, will only permit us to quote a few.

Describing the inconstant man, he says: "If he should change his apparel as fast as his thought, how often in a day would he shift himself. . . Two opinions (like two watermen) almost pull him apieces when he proposes to put his judgment into a boat, and go somewhither: presently he steps back and goes with neither. He opens his mind to receive notions, as one opens his palm to receive a handful of water: he hath very much if he could hold it. He is sure to die, but not what religion to die in! He demurs like a posed lawyer, as if delay could remove some impediments. . . . He knows not whether he should say his pater-noster in Latin or English; and so leaves it and his prayers unsaid. He loathes manna after two days feeding, and is almost weary of the sun for perpetual shining. His best dwelling would be his confined chamber, where he would trouble nothing but his pillow. He is full of business at church, a stranger at home, a sceptic abroad, an observer in the street, everywhere a fool."

Quoting the Apostolic command, "Walk in love," he observes: "He doth not say 'talk of it,' but 'walk in it.' This precept is for course, not discourse. Love sits at the door of many men's lips but hath no dwelling in the heart. We may truly say of that charity, it is not at home."

Of the Jesuits he says: "Gold is their sun by day and silver their moon by night;" and compares money obtained by fraud and oppression to quicksilver, as it

"will always be running. If a father leave all to his son, yet the son will leave nothing for his son, perhaps nothing for himself; never resting till he hath thrown abroad with a fork all that his father got together with a rake." He delights in rebuking the vanity of his times, and thus describes the consequences of pride in dress: "The proud man is a great drinker. It is not his belly but his back that is the drunkard. He pincheth the poor, racks out the other fire, enhanceth the rent, spends his own means, and what he can finger besides, upon clothes. If his rent-day make even with his silkman, mercer, taylor, he is well. And his white madam drinks deeper than he. The walks of the city are kept in reparation with easier cost than a lady's face, and the appurtenances to her head."

In "The Devil's Banquet," he gives the following description of prodigality: "The decoration of the body is the decoration of the substance: the back wears the silver that would be better in the purse. The grounds are unstocked to make the back glister. Adam and Eve had coats of beasts' skins; but now many beasts, flesh, skins and all, will scarce furnish a prodigal younger son of Adam with a suit. And as many sell their tame beasts in the country to enrich their wild beasts in the city; so you have others, that to revel at a Christmas, they will ravel out their patrimonies. . . Pride and Opulency may kiss in the morning as a married couple, but will be divorced before sunset. They whose fathers could sit and tell their Michaelmas hundredths, have brought December on their estates by

wearing May on their backs all the year. This is the plague and clog of the fashion, that it is never unhampered of debts. Pride begins with *habeo*, ends with *debeo*; and sometimes makes good every syllable *graditim*. *Debeo*, I owe more than I am worth. *Beo*, I bless my creditors. *Eo*, I betake me to my heels. Thus England was honored with them while they were gallants: Germany or Rome must take them being beggars. Oh, that men would break their fast with Frugality, that they never sup with Want. . . Oh that they could from the promontory of their rich estates foresee how near Pride and Riot dwell to the spittle-house! not but that God alloweth both garments for necessity and ornaments for comeliness, according to thy degree; but such must not wear silks that are not able to buy cloth. Many women are so fine that they are the worse again. Fashions, far-fetched and dear-bought, fill the eye with content, but empty the purse. Christ's reproof to the Jews may fitly be turned on us: 'Why do ye kill the prophets and build up your tombs?' Why do ye kill your souls with sins and garnish your bodies with braveries? The maid is finer than the mistress, which, Saint Jerome saith, would make a man laugh and a Christian weep to see how Hagar is tricked up and Sarah put into rags: the soul goes every day in her worky-day clothes, undighted with graces; whiles the body keeps perpetual holy-day in gayness. The house of Saul is set up, the flesh is graced; the house of David is persecuted and kept down, the spirit is neglected. I know that Pride is never without her own

pain, though she will not feel it, be her garments what they will, yet she will never be too hot, nor too cold. There is no time to pray, read, hear, meditate; all goes away in trimming. There is so much rigging about the ship, that a woman, for the most part, is the least part of herself. The garment of salvation is slighted and the long white robe of glory scorned: the Lord Jesus Christ, a garment not the worse but the better for wearing, is thrown by, and the ridiculous chain of Pride is put on: but that alone doth beautify or make the soul happy; no ornament doth so grace us, as that we are gracious. Thus the substance is emptied for a shew; and many rob themselves of all they have to put a good suit on their backs."

The following smart hit at the manner in which Church property was dealt with in his time may be read with advantage in our own: "Haman was not more made for Mordecai's cap, than the great one is that as much observance ariseth not to him from the black coat as from the blue coat. The Church is beholden to him, that he will turn one of his cast servitors out of his own into her service; out of his chamber into the chancel; from the buttery-hatch into the pulpit. He that was not worthy enough to wait on his worship is good enough for God. . . If a rich man have four sons, the youngest or contemnedst must be the priest. Perhaps the eldest shall be committed to his lands; for if his lands should be committed to him his father fears he would carry them all up to London: he dares not venture it without binding it sure. For which purpose

he maketh his second son a lawyer: a good rising profession; for a man may by that run up, like Jonah's gourd, to preferment; and for wealth, a cluster of law is worth a whole vintage of gospel. If he study means for a third, lo! physic smells well. That as the other may keep the estate from running, so this the body from ruining. For his youngest son, he cares not if he puts him into God's service; and makes him capable of the Church goods, though not pliable to the Church's good. Thus having provided for the estate of his inheritance, of his advancement, of his carcase, he comes last to think of his conscience."

Speaking of certain persons who refused to salute their neighbours when they passed them, lest the former should be going to a tavern to get drunk, he says, "It's but a peradventure that he is going to be drunk; but without all peradventure thou art not sober that darest so rashly judge thy brother."

Our limited space will not permit us to give any lengthy account of the humorists belonging to this period, or we could fill a volume with specimens of their queer conceits and curious texts, one person preaching from "But," another from "And Bartholomew" on Bartholomew's Day, while a third expatiated on the interjection O! during a series of more than a score of sermons. But many of them were men eminent like Brooke and Watson for wealth of thought, richness of learning, beauty of style, and even tender and imaginative pathos.

Among the later Puritans we may refer to "bold"

TOM BRADBURY,

whose preaching was characterised by great eccentricity and humour. He has been compared to South, but was far more genial and good-natured, though he hated the Stuarts, and it is said that on the death of Queen Anne, he preached from the words, "Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her, for she is a king's daughter."

Bradbury was one of the Dissenting ministers who carried up the congratulatory address to George I. upon his accession. As they dressed on that occasion in cloaks, according to the fashion of the Court, a nobleman (said to have been Bolingbroke) accosted him with "Pray, sir, is this a funeral?" "Yes, my lord," replied Bradbury, "it is the funeral of the Schism Bill, and the resurrection of liberty."

He disliked Watts' psalms, and when his clerk once gave out a stanza from this version, he reproved him saying, "Let us have none of Watts' *whims*." And he would never suffer his clerk to sing a triple time tune, which he called "a long leg and a short one." Burnet had arranged to let him have information of the Queen's death, which was hourly expected, by sending a messenger to the chapel, who should drop a handkerchief from the gallery as a token of the event. This was done during the sermon. Bradbury suppressed his feelings until its close, but in the last prayer returned thanks to God for the deliverance of these kingdoms from the evil designs of the enemies of truth and righteousness.

During the Arian controversy, Bradbury had been contending at a general meeting of the London ministers held at Salters' Hall, that those who really believed the doctrine of Christ's divinity should openly avow it, and to bring the matter to a test added, "You who are not ashamed to own the Deity of Christ, follow me into the gallery." He had scarcely ascended two or three steps before the opposite party commenced hissing him. Turning round, he said, "I have been pleading for Him who bruised the serpent's head; no wonder then that the seed of the serpent should hiss."

CHAPTER VI.

SOUTH AND S. WESLEY.

Robert South, D.D., (1633-1716).

THIS celebrated "humorist of the Restoration," as he has been called, was born at Hackney, and in early life went to Westminster School, and in 1651 became a student at Christchurch, Oxford. After taking his degrees of B.A., and M.A., he was ordained in 1658, and only two years afterwards was chosen University Orator. In the following year he was appointed chaplain to Lord Clarendon, who at his installation as Chancellor of Oxford was exceedingly pleased with South's complimentary periods. In 1663 he took his degree as Doctor of Divinity, and in 1677 accompanied the English ambassador to Poland to congratulate Sobieski on his election as king. After his return he was presented to the rectory of Inslip, in Oxfordshire, and made Chaplain-in-Ordinary to Charles II. Many of his printed sermons were preached before the merry monarch, with some of which, especially the one in which he gave the famous

but coarse description of Cromwell's first appearance in the House of Commons, the King was greatly delighted. A bishopric and other dignities were offered him, but he steadily refused all offers of preferment, though frequently pressed upon him.

His sermons are principally noted for their wit and eloquence. They are masterpieces of vigorous sense and sound English, and abound in lively and witty terms, not always in severely decorous consonance with the seriousness of the subject matter. His hatred of Puritanism and every form of Dissent was so fierce as frequently to disfigure them, and make it impossible for us to read them with the pleasure we otherwise should do. Still they contain passages of great beauty, and are written with great clearness and precision. Take the following for instance :—

"A blind man sitting in the chimney corner is pardonable enough, but sitting at the helm is intolerable."

"Solomon built his temple with the tallest cedars; and surely when God refused the defective and the maimed for sacrifice, we cannot think he requires them for the priesthood."

"Piety engages no man to be dull, though lately, I confess, dulness with some is taken for a mark of regeneration."

"There be some who say study is unnecessary for a minister: they will preach only their own experiences. When such is the case the hearers will quickly have more than sufficient experience of their confidence and ridiculous impertinence.

"Where do we find such rhetoric and poetry as in the Scriptures, or such pathos as in the Lamentations of Jeremy? One would think that every word was the noise of a breaking heart, &c. So that he who said he would not read the Scripture for fear of spoiling his style, shewed himself as much a blockhead as an atheist."

"Vice rides successfully and gloriously, lives magnificently, and fares deliciously every day; and all this in the face of God and man, without either fear of one or shame of the other. Nay, so far are our modern sinners from sneaking under their guilt, that they scorn to hide, or as much as hold down their head for less crimes than many others have lost theirs.

He could be eminently practical, as in the following quotations:—

"The Itch in the Ear.—In our days sad experience shows that hearing sermons has with most swallowed up and devoured the practice of them, and manifestly instead of it; rendering many zealots amongst us as really guilty of the superstition of resting in the base *opus operatum* of this duty, as the Papists are, or can be charged to be in any of their religious performances whatever. The Apostle justly reproaches such with 'itching ears' (2 Tim. iv. 3). And I cannot see but that the itch in the ear is as bad a distemper as in any other part of the body, and perhaps worse."

"Will not the world be induced to look upon my religion as a lie, if I allow myself to lie for my religion?"

"For aught I see, though the Mosaical part of

Judaism be abolished among Christians, the Pharisaical part of it never will."

Fierce as were his invectives against sectaries, as he termed those who did not belong to his church, he could aim a smart stroke at the existing evils of the Court, as when speaking of the unequal distribution of favours after the Restoration, he says, "But have those been any gainers by the deliverance who were the greatest losers by the war? No (in a far different sense from that of the Scripture), to him only that has shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly. But if a man's loyalty has stripped him of his estates, his interest for his relations, then, like the lame man at the pool of Bethesda, every one steps in before him."

"When Christ says that a Scribe must be well-stocked with things new and old, we must not think that He meant that he should have a hoard of old sermons (whosoever made them), with a bundle of new opinions, for this certainly would have furnished out such entertainment to his spiritual guests as no rightly-disposed palate could ever relish, or stomach bear. And therefore, the thing which Christ here drives at must needs be only variety and copiousness of sacred eloquence."

In a sermon on the dangers of prosperity he says:—"Who almost is there whose heart does not swell with his bags, and whose thoughts do not follow the proportion of his condition? What difference has been seen in the same man poor and preferred. His mind, like a mushroom, has shot up in a night. His business is first to

forget himself, and then his friends. When the sun shines the peacock displays his train."

In another sermon on covetousness, he describes it as "a vice, which by striking in with some of the most active principles of our nature, and at the same time perverting them too, has ever yet been, and will, no doubt, ever be too hard for all the rules and arguments brought against it from bare morality. So that, as a grammarian once answered his prince, offering to enter into a dispute with him upon a grammatical point, that he would by no means dispute with one who had so many legions at his command; so as little success is like to be found in managing a dispute against covetousness, which sways and carries all before it in the strength of that great Queen-Regent of the World, Money." This evil he says is generally accompanied by another—impatience—which causes persons to grasp at all, "scorning to wait God's leisure, and attend humbly and dutifully upon the issues of his wise and just providence. Such persons would have riches make themselves wings to fly to them; though one much wiser than them has assured us, that when they make themselves wings they intend to fly away."

He has two sermons on covetousness which abound with wit. We can only afford space for the following:—"We need not go to the lying shopkeeper who sits retailing away heaven and salvation for pence and halfpence, and seldom vends any commodity but he sells his soul with it, like brown paper, into the bargain; but we may find the covetous man in a clean, contrary

disguise, shaking his elbow in a tavern with some rich young cully by his side, who having newly buried his father in the country, has come to give his estate a more honourable burial in the city."

"Covetousness is also tenacious in keeping. We have seen how eagerly it can catch: we may also see how hard it can gripe. . . If we cast our eyes over the whole creation, we shall find every part of the universe contributing something or other, either to the help or ornament of the whole . . but the covetous person lives as if the world were made altogether for him, and not he for the world; to take in everything, and to part with nothing . . The cries of the poor never enter into his ears; or if they do, he has always one ear readier to let them out than the other to take them in, so that it is a question whether his heart be harder or his fist closer. In a word, he is a pest and a monster, greedier than the sea, and more barren than the shore; a scandal to religion, and an exception from common humanity; and upon no account fit to live in this world, but to be made an example of God's justice in the next. The truth is, the covetous person is so bad a paymaster, that he lives and dies as much a debtor to himself as to anyone else, his own back and belly having an action against him; living a beggar that he may die rich."

Rev. Samuel Wesley (1666-1730),

father of the celebrated John and Charles Wesley, was born at Whitchurch, Dorsetshire, in 1666, and educated

at a Dissenting academy at Stepney. At seventeen years of age he joined the Establishment, and entered himself at Oxford University, possessing at the time only forty-five shillings. While there he supported himself by writing and assisting younger students. In August, 1688, he was ordained deacon, and in the February of the following year priest, and appointed to St. Andrew's Church, Holborn. After holding a curacy for twelve months at a salary of £28, he was appointed as chaplain on board one of the King's ships, where he received £70 per annum. In 1689, he married Susannah, the intelligent and accomplished daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley, and in 1691 obtained, through the Marquis of Normanby, the living of South Ormsby, Lincolnshire, worth £50 per annum. In 1696 he removed to Epworth, where his son John was afterwards born, and where he died April 25th, 1730, aged 70.

Wesley had a vigorous intellect, which he cultivated with considerable care. He was possessed of a large amount of wit and humour, and was full of vivacious anecdotes. Many stories are told illustrative of his love of fun and regard for piety and decorum. On one occasion he was at a coffee-house in London, when among the gentlemen in the room was an officer of the Guards, who swore dreadfully. Mr. W. saw that he could not speak to him without much difficulty; he therefore desired the waiter to bring him a glass of water. When it was brought, he said aloud, "Carry it to that gentleman in the red coat, and desire him to wash his mouth after his oaths." The officer rose up

in a fury, but the gentlemen laid hold of him, one of them crying out, "Nay, Colonel, you gave the first offence. You know it is an affront to a clergyman to swear in his presence." The officer was restrained and Mr. W. departed. Some years afterwards, on going through St. James's Park, a gentleman accosted him and inquired if he recollected him. Mr. W. replied "No." The gentleman then recalled to his remembrance the scene at the coffee-house, and added, "Since that time, sir, I thank God I have feared an oath, and everything that is offensive to the Divine Majesty: and as I have a perfect recollection of you, I rejoice at seeing you, and could not refrain from expressing my gratitude to God and you."

For several years Mr. W. had to grapple with pecuniary difficulties, and Dr. Sharp, Archbishop of York, often seasonably assisted him. The following extract acknowledging the kindness of His Grace is highly characteristic:—"Epworth, May 18th, 1801. My Lord,—This comes as a rider to the last, by the same post, to bring such news as I presume will not be unwelcome to a person who has such a particular concern for me. Last night my wife brought me a few children. There are but two yet, a boy and a girl, and I think they are all at present."

In 1691, Mr. Wesley engaged with his brother-in-law, John Dunton, the famous and eccentric bookseller, in carrying on the *Athenian Mercury*, a paper intended to resolve "all nice and curious questions proposed by the ingenious." It was one of the earliest efforts to introduce

cheap literature, and among its contributors were Defoe; Nahaum Tate, Poet Laureate; Dean Swift; Sir William Temple; and many of the most celebrated writers of the day. Samuel Wesley took charge of the theological and ecclesiastical departments. The following passage therefore may be safely considered to be from his pen. This will be considered the more likely, when it is remembered he wrote one-third of the entire publication with his own hand:—Question. "Why one hour's sermon seems longer than two hours' conversation?" Answer. "For several very unlucky reasons. Sometimes, because the sermon may be duller than the conversation; at others, because the hearer is dull himself, and hasn't the wit to like it. Sometimes, because those in the pulpit talk all, and talk sense; when in conversation those who love it may hear their own dear selves talk as much and as impertinently as they please, and besides, have the liberty of contradiction—the very life and soul of some people. But the most general reason for this is a very sad one, and that is the almost universal decay of piety, added to the natural aversion which the best of men find in their minds towards acts of devotion."

Some one sent the following question: "Whether a person by the bare light of nature would be disposed to think women have souls?" After stating that men have them, "undoubtedly women have them too," he says: "As for the person who puts this question, we only wish him the veriest virago in Christendom to his yoke-fellow, who would quickly satisfy him whether her sex had souls or no."

To the question "How may a man reclaim a headstrong wife?" the reply is: "Give her rope enough . . . For she's not to be made civil by anything but the worms. But if you have a mind to try what hand you have at working miracles, you may try one of the following directions: Watch her tame—that's the last remedy first; this is a way to tame even lyons, and it may tygers too: some have gotten a drum and beat it so long 'till their poor women have been struck perfectly dumb and deaf with the noise on't. Some are for letting her blood—if anywhere 'twould be best, one would think, under the tongue, or in both arms, to prevent her scolding or fighting. Others are for drawing her teeth, which would do well enough if they could cut the nails too at the same time; but the surest way of all is being a good husband yourself, for 'tis bad husbands are very often the cause that the wives are no better than they should be."

Another question was, "Whether negroes shall rise so at the last day?" To which the answer is: "The pinch of the question only lies—whether white or black is the best colour? for the negroes won't be persuaded but their jet is finer and more beautiful than our alabaster. If we paint the devil black they paint him white, and with as much reason, none amongst them being born white but such as are a kind of leprous persons. They boast too of a Roman Emperor, one of the best of 'em ('twas Severus), and saints, fathers and martyrs without number, who have been of that colour." He concludes, however, that they will leave their

darkness behind them when they rise from the grave.

The following question and answer have a reference to the subject of this volume. Question. "How far is it consistent with wisdom to banter?" Answer. "So far as is not injurious to the credit of your neighbour, or the reputation of piety. But this is only meant between persons of equal tempers. Again, it may be necessary, by way of satyr, to shame some persons out of ill actions, when other methods fail; and it has often been found effectual"

Question. "There's a raven has built a nest in the north-west pinnacle of Louth Church, in Lincolnshire (which church is 57 foot higher than Bow); the like has not been remember'd of 60 years, and above. Some people look upon it as ominous: your thoughts are desired on the matter." Answer. "We believe, if the story be true, that the raven was willing to choose the best place she could find for a prospect for herself, and her young ones. As for anything ominous in it, we think it's only fit to be laughed at. . . . By the way, poor Lincolnshire is very unlucky of late, for this it seems is the second direful omen that wise Mr. Mob has discover'd in't within these few weeks: the Sutton whale been full as famous as the Louth steeple-raven; tho' we confess, had this raven, like a halcyon, swam down the river, built its nest in the sea; and this gentle whale flown o'er the mountain tops—topt the Woulds and been shipwreck'd on the north-west pinnacle of Louth Church—there had been something in the business, if not very ominous, yet very wonderful,

and would well have deserved the notice of the *Chronicle*, as well as the *Athenian Oracle*."

Wesley published his first work in 1685. It consisted of a number of poems, some of which were written when he was quite young, and others after he went to Oxford. Many of them flash with wit, and are characterised by an easy and flowing style. They contain expressions which would now be considered somewhat coarse and indelicate, but would not have been so considered at that time.

The author gave the volume the title of "Maggots: or Poems on several subjects never before handled; by a Scholar (London)." In the dedication he states that it was his "first formed birth," and in the epistle to the reader he declares that the "Maggots" were "the natural issue of his own brain-pan—born and bred there and only there." In reply to the objection that the work is "light, vain, frothy, and below the gravity of a man, at least of a Christian," he says, if the objector will lend him a handful of beard, and be at the charge of grafting it on, he will promise him a speedy reformation. Besides, he argues that time ought to be allowed for recreation as well as work; and, moreover, he hopes that he has written nothing to make even himself or his reader blush.

The book is embellished with a portrait of the author crowned with laurel, and having a maggot seated on his brow. Beneath the portrait are the following lines:—

"In his own defence the author writes,
Because when this foul maggot bites,
He ne'er can rest in quiet:

Which makes him make so sad a face,
He'd beg your worship, or your grace,
Unsight, unseen, to buy it."

"Mr. Wesley," says Tyreman, "was a man of immense reading, and was possessed of great vivacity and wit. . . . He was full of anecdote and witty and wise sayings, which gave to his private conversations great interest. The withering wit of his son Samuel, the quiet sarcasm of his son John, the playful raillery of of his daughter Emilia, and the keen satire of Mehetabel, were all inherited from himself. In early life he was connected with some of the greatest wits then flourishing, and to the day of his death highly relished pleasantry, when it was pure and good-tempered."

Like many humorists he was fond of practical joking, and sometimes indulged in it at the expense of his neighbours and friends. The following story is related by Dr. Adam Clark, who states that he had it from John Wesley himself. The story has been questioned by some, but the testimony of Dr. Clark in our opinion remains unshaken.

His parish clerk was a well-meaning but an exceedingly vain man. He regarded his master as the greatest man in the place; but as he stood nearest to him in church ministrations, he seemed to think himself second only in worth and importance. He invariably appeared in the church wearing one of Mr. Wesley's cast-off wigs, which were far too large for his small head, and consequently his appearance was ludicrously grotesque. One morning, before church-time, Mr. Wesley said, "John, I shall preach on a particular

subject to-day and shall choose my own psalm, of which I shall give out the first line, and you shall proceed as usual." This arrangement suited John exceedingly, and the service went forward as usual till they came to the singing, when Mr. Wesley gave out the following line :

" Like to an owl in ivy bush."

This was sung, and the following line John, peeping out of the large canonical wig in which his head was half lost, gave out with an audible voice, and an appropriate connecting twang—

"That rueful thing am I."

The whole congregation saw and felt the similitude, and could not refrain from laughter.

It was the same clerk who said in Epworth Church (on the king's return to London from one of his expeditions), " Let us sing to the praise and glory of God a hymn of my own composing :

" King William has come home, come home ;
King William home is come ;
Therefore together let us sing
The hymn that is called Te Deum."

Mr. Kirk, in his " Mother of the Wesleys," states that he and others have searched in vain for the hymn in which the lines " Like to an an owl, &c.," are contained. They may, however, have been in a hymn of " his own composing."

He could administer reproof in a very humorous manner occasionally. Once for instance he discovered that a farmer had deliberately cut off the ears from the

tithe wheat that was laid out in the field, and filled a bag with the stolen produce. Without saying a word, the injured rector took the delinquent by the arm and walked with him into the Market Place, where he seized the bag and poured out the corn before all the people, at the same time telling them what the culprit had been doing.

On another occasion he rebuked the parsimony of an acquaintance in the following manner. At Temple Belwood, not far from Epworth, lived a poor miserly wretch, who was hardly ever known to dine a friend or relieve a case of distress. Coming under a momentary impulse of another kind, he invited Wesley and a select circle of friends to dinner. As soon as the repast was ended, the clergyman, being requested to return thanks, delivered the following impromptu grace :

> **"Thanks for this feast! for 'tis no less**
> **Than eating manna in the wilderness.**
> **Here meagre famine bears controlless sway,**
> **And ever drives each fainting wretch away ;**
> **Yet here !—O how beyond a saint's belief !—**
> **We've seen the glories of a chine of beef :**
> **Here chimneys smoke which never smoked before.**
> **And we have dined where we shall dine no more."**

Wesley probably adopted this course with the design of curing the proverbial avarice of his host: if so he was doomed to disappointment, for it is said immediately after the last line, "And we have dined where we shall dine no more!" had fallen from his lips, the old man, in unmistakable tones, exclaimed, "No, gentlemen, for it's sadly too expensive!"

On one occasion, when Wesley returned from London, the parishioners complained that the curate had preached to the congregation nothing but the duty of paying their debts, and behaving well among their neighbours. The complainants added, "We think, sir, there is more in religion than this." Mr. Wesley replied, "There certainly is; I will hear him myself." The curate was sent for, and was told that he must preach next Lord's Day, the rector at the same time saying, "I suppose you can prepare a sermon on any text I give you." "Yes sir," replied the ready curate. "Then," said Wesley, "prepare a sermon on Heb. xi. 6, 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.'" The time arrived, and the text being read with great solemnity, the curate began his brief discourse by saying—"Friends, faith is a most excellent virtue, and it produces other virtues also. In particular, it makes a man pay his debts;" and thus he proceeded for about fifteen minutes, when the rector clearly saw that paying debts was the alpha and the omega of the curate's theology.

CHAPTER VII.

DEAN SWIFT AND LAURENCE STERNE.

WERE it not that we have used the term religious in a very broad sense—applying it in some cases more to the profession than to the practice of those whose characters we have attempted to sketch—we should hesitate before we included Swift and Sterne in our list of religious humorists. It seems impossible, however, to omit all reference to the former, who has been termed the greatest genius of his age; or to the latter, of whom Carlyle thus speaks: "Our last specimen of humour, and with all his faults the best; our finest, if not our strongest, for Yorick and Corporal Trim, and Uncle Toby, have yet no brotherhood but in Don Quixote, far as he lies above them."

JONATHAN SWIFT (1667-1745),

though the child of English parents, first saw the light in Dublin. His father died before he was born, and left his widow in indigent circumstances. At the age of six he was sent to Kilkenny School, and at fourteen to the

University of Dublin, his uncle, Godwin Swift, defraying the expenses of his education. Owing, however, to his limited means, he could not assist his nephew to the extent that was necessary, and during the seven years the latter remained at the University he groaned under the most abject poverty and dependence, the recollection of which galled his proud irascible spirit, and embittered much of his future existence.

While at the University, Swift made but little advancement in formal studies, absolutely refusing in instances to read the books that were put into his hands. When, for instance, his tutor urged him to make himself master of the text-book on logic, he asked what it was he was to learn from the subject? His tutor told him the art of reasoning. Swift said that he found no want of any such art; that he could reason very well without it; and that so far as he could observe, they who had made the greatest proficiency in logic, had, instead of the art of reasoning, acquired the art of wrangling; and instead of clearing up obscurities, had learned how to perplex matters that were clear enough before.

On leaving the University, he removed to England, where his mother resided, and was shortly afterwards employed by Sir William Temple as his private secretary. Here he remained until 1694, when he resolved to take orders, and obtained a small living in Ireland worth about £100 a year. At the persuasion of Sir William, however, he resigned his living in 1698, and returned to England with about fourscore pounds

in his possession, and acted as his friend and chaplain until the death of his patron, who left Swift a legacy, and "the care, trust, and advantage of publishing his posthumous writings."

It was while he was in Sir William's employ that he wrote the wildest, wittiest, and most powerful satirical work of the eighteenth century, "The Tale of a Tub," which was not, however, published till some time afterwards, and which the author never directly owned. In this work he satirises the Pope, Luther, and Calvin, indiscriminately. He thus describes His Holiness. "I have seen him, Peter, in his fits, take three old high-crowned hats, and clap them all on his head three-story high, with a huge bunch of keys at his girdle, and an angling rod in his left hand. In which guise, whoever went to take him by the hand by way of salutation, Peter, with much grace, like a well-educated spaniel, would present them with his foot; and if they refused his civility, then he would raise it as high as their chaps, and give them a kick in the mouth, which has ever since been called a salute."

He also ridicules transubstantiation, representing Peter as asking his brothers to dine, and giving them a loaf of bread and insisting that it was mutton.

About the time that he wrote "The Tale of a Tub," he also composed his inimitable "Predictions of Isaac Bickerstaffe, Esq.;" and several poetical pieces, all possessing a considerable amount of humour.

Upon the death of Sir William Temple, Swift immediately removed to London, where his first care

was to secure the publication of a correct edition of that nobleman's works. When this was finished he presented a copy to the King, with a short dedication written by himself as publisher. It appears from his life by Dr. Sheridan that he did not obtain the advantage he expected from the dedication.

After a little while, however, he obtained from Lord Berkeley the vicarage of Laracor, in Ireland, worth £400 per annum, with other church preferments, in consequence of which he left London and went to reside among his new parishioners, where he continued for some time "in the constant and strict discharge of his duties."

During this time Swift's pen was hardly ever employed, except in writing sermons; and he does not seem to have indulged himself in any sallies of fancy for some years, excepting only the "Meditation on a Broomstick," and the "Essay on the Faculties of the Mind," both written in the same year, 1703. The occasion of his writing the former amusing article is thus described by his biographer, on the authority of Lady Betty Germaine, daughter of Lady Berkeley.

In the yearly visits which he made to London, during his stay there he passed much of his time at Lord Berkeley's, officiating as chaplain to the family, and attending Lady Berkeley in her private devotions. After which, the Doctor, by her desire, used to read to her some moral or religious discourse. The Countess had at this time taken a great liking to Mr. Boyle's "Meditations," and was determined to go through

them in that manner; but as Swift had by no means the same relish for that kind of writing which her ladyship had, he soon grew weary of the talk; and a whim coming into his head, resolved to get rid of it in a way which might occasion some sport in the family; for which they had as high a relish as himself. After reading one of these "Meditations," he took an opportunity of conveying away the book, and dexterously inserted a leaf, on which he had written his own "Meditation on a Broomstick;" after which he took care to have the book restored to its proper place, and in his next attendance on my lady, when he was desired to proceed on the next "Meditation," Swift opened upon the place where the leaf had been inserted, and with great composure of countenance read the title "A Meditation on a Broom-stick." Lady Berkeley, a little surprised at the oddity of the title, stopped him, repeating the words "'A Meditation on a Broom-stick!' Bless me! what a strange subject! But there is no knowing what useful lessons of instruction this wonderful man may draw from things apparently most trivial. Pray let us hear what he says upon it." Swift then, with an inflexible gravity of countenance, proceeded to read the "Meditation" in the same solemn tone which he had used in delivering the former. Lady Berkeley, not at all suspecting a trick, in the fulness of her prepossession, was every now and then during the reading of it, expressing her admiration of this extraordinary man, who could draw such fine moral reflections from so contemptible a subject; with which, though Swift

must have been inwardly not a little tickled, yet he preserved a most perfect composure of features, so that she had not the least room left to suspect any deceit. Soon after, some company coming in, Swift pretended business, and withdrew, foreseeing what was to follow. Lady Berkeley, full of the subject, soon entered upon the praises of those heavenly "Meditations" of Mr. Boyle. "But," said she, "the Doctor has just been reading one to me which has surprised me more than all the rest." One of the company asked which of the "Meditations" she meant. She answered directly, in the simplicity of her heart, "I mean that excellent 'Meditation on a Broom-stick.'" The company looked at each other with surprise, and could scarce refrain from laughing; but they all agreed that they had never heard of such a "Meditation" before. "Upon my word," said my lady, "there it is; look into that book, and convince yourselves." One of them opened the book, and found it there indeed, but in Swift's hand-writing, upon which a general burst of laughter ensued; and my lady, when the first surprise was over, enjoyed the joke as much as any of them, saying "What a vile trick has that rogue played me! But it is his way, he never baulks his humour in anything." The affair ended in a great deal of harmless mirth, and Swift, you may be sure, was not asked to proceed any farther in the "Meditations."

While Swift was in London, he was not personally known to any of the leading wits and writers of eminence, until he attracted the notice of Addison, Arbuthnot, and a few others who belonged to Addison's little coterie,

who were in the habit of assembling at Button's Coffee-house. An amusing account is given in his life of the impression produced upon the visitors by the strange looking country parson, whom they suspected of being out of his mind; and of the manner in which they were led to recognise his genius and wit by his smart replies to one or two somewhat impertinent questions which were addressed to him.

In 1710 Swift returned to London, when he dined almost daily with the Prime Minister or one of the principal members of the Government, and obtained from them almost everything he asked, for he had now become famous through the publication of his "Argument against Christianity," in which he ironically rebuked the irreligion of his time. He continued in the metropolis until 1714, when, after the death of the Queen, he returned to Ireland, having been created Dean of St. Patrick's, where he spent the remainder of his life, except making a brief visit to England in 1716, when he published the most universally popular of all his works, "Gulliver's Travels."

He was for some time very unpopular in Ireland, and met with violent opposition from not only the mob, but some occupying positions of eminence and influence. The tide, however, soon began to turn, and before many years the Dean was not only the most popular person in Dublin, but was looked upon by the populace as the saviour of their country. This change in public opinion was brought about by the publication of the "Drapier's Letters." These arose out of the following circumstances.

A person named Wood had obtained a patent for coining farthings and half-pence of debased coin for the use of Ireland. Had this project succeeded "it would have ended in the total and perhaps irretrievable ruin of the country." Justly alarmed and indignant, the Parliament, Privy-Council, Grand Juries, and numerous bodies of the inhabitants throughout the kingdom, strongly remonstrated with the British Minister, but all in vain. Swift no sooner became acquainted with the state of affairs than he wrote his unparalleled letters under the signature of "M. B. Drapier." They abounded with stinging appeals and fierce denunciation, and though the British Government offered a reward of £300 for the discovery of the writer, such was the storm aroused by them that the Government ultimately withdrew the patent, finding that if they brought the author to trial it would be at the expense of an Irish rebellion. "From that time till his death Swift was the true king of Ireland."

The following passage will illustrate the lighter and most humorous style of the letters. "I am very sensible that such a work as I have undertaken might have worthily employed a much better pen: but when a house is attempted to be robbed, it often happens that the weakest in the family runs first to stop the door. All my assistance, were some informations from an eminent person; whereof I am afraid I have spoiled a few, by endeavouring to make them of a piece with my own productions; and the rest, I was not able to manage. I was in the case of David, who could not move in the armour of Saul, and therefore I rather chose to attack

this uncircumcised Philistine (Wood I mean) with a sling and a stone. And I may say for Wood's honour, as well as my own, that he resembles Goliath in many circumstances very applicable to the present purpose: for, Goliath had a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass, and he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. In short he was, like Mr. Wood, all over brass, and he defied the armies of the living God. Goliath's conditions of combat were likewise the same with those of Wood: if he prevail against us, then shall we be his servants. But if it happens that I prevail over him, I renounce the other part of the condition; he shall never be a servant of mine; for I do not think him fit to be trusted in any honest man's shop."

These letters, said Dr. Johnson, delivered Ireland from plunder and oppression; and showed that wit, confederated with truth, had such a force as authority was unable to resist. To the same purpose are the lines of Pope:—

> "Let Ireland tell how wit upheld her cause,
> Her trade supported and supplied her laws;
> And leave on Swift this grateful verse engraved,
> 'The rights a court attacked a poet saved.'"

It does not come within the scope of our plan to follow Swift through the remaining years of his life, during which he endured great bodily and mental suffering. Just before he died he threw out satires and lampoons in such profusion that it was evident the fire

of his genius was still unextinguished. His death was deeply lamented by the people among whom he lived, and to this day they reverence his memory with loving enthusiasm, and speak of him as the "great Irishman."

"He was," says the author of the "History of English Humour," "one of the most highly gifted and successful humorists any country ever produced. A bright fancy runs like a vein of gold through nearly all his writings, and enriches the wide and varied field upon which he enters. He says of himself:—

> "'Swift had the sin of wit, no venial crime;
> Nay, 'tis affirmed he sometimes dealt in rhyme:
> Humour and mirth had place in all he writ,—
> He reconciled divinity with wit.'"

"He moves laughter," says Macaulay, "but never joins in it. He appears in his works such as he appears in society. All the company are convulsed with merriment, while the Dean, the author of all the mirth, preserves an invincible gravity and even sourness of aspect, and gives utterance to the most eccentric and ludicrous fancies with the air of a man reading the Commination service."

We have but small space left for anecdotes and illustrations. Take the following from among many given in his life by Sheridan.

One day the cook greatly over-roasted the only joint they had for dinner; upon which he sent for her up and said, with great coolness and gravity, "Take this down into the kitchen and do it less." She replied that was impossible. "Pray then," said he, "if you had roasted

it too little, could you not have done it more?" "Yes," she said, "she could easily have done that." "Why then," said he, "if you must commit a fault, let me advise you to commit one that can be mended."

Being one day at a sheriff's feast, the functionary in giving a toast called out to him, "Mr. Dean, 'The Trade of Ireland,'" Swift answered quickly, "Sir, I drink no memories."

He greatly admired the talents of the Duke of Wharton (as the Duke did his), who one day dining with the Dean, recounted several wild frolics he had run through. "My lord," said Swift, "let me recommend one more to you—take a frolic to be good—rely upon it you will find it the pleasantest frolic you ever engaged in."

Happening to be in the company of a petulant young man, who prided himself in saying pert things to the Dean, and at last, getting up with some conceited gesticulation, said with a confident air, "You must know, Mr. Dean, I set up for a wit." "Do you," said the Dean, "then take my advice, and sit down again."

One day Swift observed a great rabble assembled in a large space before the Deanery door in Kevin-street, and upon enquiring the cause of this, was told it was to see the eclipse. He immediately sent for the beadle, and gave him his lesson what he should do. Away ran Davy for his bell, and after ringing it for some time among the crowd, bawled out, "O yes, O yes, all manner of persons concerned are desired to take notice that it is the Dean of St. Patrick's will and pleasure that the eclipse will be

put off till this hour to-morrow. So God save the King and reverence the Dean." The mob upon this notice immediately dispersed; only some, more cunning than the rest, swore they would not lose another afternoon, for that the Dean, who was a very comical man might take it into his head to put off the eclipse again, and so make fools of them a second time.

The Dean died October 19th, 1745.

Laurence Sterne (1713-1768),

like Swift, was born in Ireland and of English parents. His great-grandfather had been Archbishop of York, and his mother heiress of Sir Roger Jacques, of Elvington in Yorkshire, in which county he was sent to school, afterwards finishing his education at Cambridge, where he took the degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts. Having taken orders, his uncle, a dignitary of the church, procured for him the living of Sutton in Yorkshire, and made him prebendary of York. Some time afterwards, through the influence of his wife, he was presented to the living of Stillington in the same county. At one of these (Sutton) he spent his time in quiet obscurity, unheard of and unknown, until his forty-seventh year, when the publication of "Tristram Shandy" made him famous. It had immense success. "It must live as long as the English language. There's a good deal in the work that needs excuse, but the leading characters are genuine creations, at once fantastic and real, in which the subtlest reconcilement is effected between the sportive exuberance of fancy and the sober outlines of truth.

The humour of Sterne is the most subtle, airy, and tender in our literature; and in many passages he shews himself master of a pathos equally exquisite and refined."

Sterne also published four volumes of sermons, which went through seven editions in a short time, and "The Sentimental Journey," which had a large sale. This latter work was published in the beginning of 1768, and on the 18th of March of the same year, poor Sterne, worn out with disease, passed away.

Our space will not allow of specimens of Sterne's humour, but as his complete works can now be had for about five shillings there is the less necessity for doing so.

CHAPTER VIII.

JOHN BERRIDGE AND ROWLAND HILL.

John Berridge (1716-1793).

JOHN BERRIDGE was the son of a wealthy farmer, and was born in the year 1716. Having taken degrees at the Cambridge University, he, in 1749, accepted the curacy of Stapleford, which he served for the next six years. In 1755 he removed to the vicarage of Everton, where he continued to reside until his death.

In learning, Berridge, it is said, was inferior to few of the most celebrated sons of science and literature in the Cambridge University. From his entrance at Clare Hall to his acceptance of the vicarage of Everton, a period of twenty-one years, he regularly studied fifteen hours a day. His understanding was strong, and his wit almost without parallel. In stature he was tall, but not awkward; lusty, but not corpulent. His voice was deep, but not hoarse; strong, but not noisy; his pronunciation distinct, but not broad. In his countenance there was gravity without grimace: his address

was solemn, but not sour; easy, but not careless; deliberate, but not drawling; pointed, but not personal; affectionate, but not fawning. He would often weep, but never whine.

His itinerant circuit embraced the counties of Bedford, Cambridge, Essex, Hertford, and Huntingdon. In this circuit, for more than twenty years, he preached, upon an average, from ten to twelve sermons every week, and frequently rode a hundred miles. In some places from ten to fifteen thousand persons composed his congregations. People came to hear him from a distance of twenty miles, and were at Everton by seven o'clock in the morning, at which early hour he preached. Four sermons on a Sunday were his regular work. His usefulness was great. During the first year after his conversion, he was visited by a thousand persons under serious impressions; and it was computed that, during the same space of time, about four thousand persons were awakened to a concern for the welfare of their souls, under his own and the joint ministry of Mr. Hicks, a clergyman at Wrestlingworth, about four miles from Everton, who had been converted under Berridge's ministry, and who became his companion in his itinerant tours.

Magistrates, country squires, and others, furiously opposed him. "The old devil" was the only name by which he was distinguished among them for above twenty years; but in the midst of all the brave-hearted, eccentric vicar steadily pursued his work. Houses and barns were rented for preaching; lay preachers were

employed and maintained; his church income and the fortune inherited from his father were appropriated to the support and extension of his work; and even his family plate was converted into clothing for his itinerant preachers. For nearly thirty years he spent about three months annually in London, preaching in Whitfield's Tabernacle, in Tottenham-court Chapel, and in other places.

At his funeral six neighbouring clergymen attended to bear his pall, while an immense concourse, from all parts of the country, by their undissembled grief and falling tears, paid a just eulogium to his character and worth. As he was never married, he left no widow to deplore his death, nor children to perpetuate his memory; but he long lived in the grateful remembrance of thousands, who had been converted under his ministry; and by his "Christian World Unmasked" and his "Sion's Songs" (the only books he ever published), he is known to myriads who never saw him. He was a high Calvinist, but a devoted Christian. *Requiescat in pace!* Hundreds of racy anecdotes might be told concerning him, and well-nigh thousands of his pungent and witty sayings might be quoted.

The following epitaph, excepting the date of the death, was written by himself:—"Here lie the remains of John Berridge, late Vicar of Everton, and an itinerant servant of Jesus Christ: who loved his Master and His work; and, after running His errands many years, was called up to wait on Him above. Reader, art thou born again? No salvation without the new birth! I was

born in sin, February, 1716. Remained ignorant of my fallen state till 1730. Lived proudly on faith and works for salvation till 1754. Admitted to Everton Vicarage, 1755. Fled to Jesus alone for refuge 1756. Fell asleep in Christ, January 22nd, 1793."

Berridge possessed a depth of penetration, a brilliancy of fancy, and a fund of prompt wit, beyond most men. A vein of innocent humour ran through all his public and private discourses, which rendered him acceptable to many persons who were not favourable to his religious opinions.

His "Christian World Unmasked" abounds with humour, which is so interwoven with the narrative that it is difficult to present examples. The following are taken from many which we had marked.

Speaking of his qualifications to deal with the question of the health of his reader's soul, he says: "I am a physician, was regularly bred to the business, have served three apprenticeships at a noted hall of physic, and consumed a deal of candle in lighting up a little understanding; yet am reviled as a mountebank, because I have been seen upon a stage. The Prince of Physic set the fashion, and His example satisfies me though it may not content another."

After feeling the pulse of his patient, he declares that he is sick, very sick, and of a mortal disease that he had received from his parents, and which infected his whole frame. "Indeed," said he, "there is no health in you; and since you seem not sensible of the malady, I must pronounce you delirious." To this address the patient

replies, "Why you frighten me, doctor. Sure you were bred at Sion College along with Doctor Whitefield and his brethren. A very hard-mouthed race truly! who have dealt so much in pukes and blisters, no genteel people will employ them. Their practice layeth chiefly among the poor, who can bear banging."

Speaking of the unconverted man who attends religious worship but has no taste for religious exercises, he says: "He could sit four hours in an idle play-house, and though crowded up exceedingly, could keep a fixed attention all the time, and be sorry when the farce was over; but his heart goes to prayer like an idle boy to school, sauntering every step, and would play truant if he dare."

His patient having supposed that the sorry wretch who comes to Christ heavy-laden as a sinner, must be "some highwayman, or house-breaker, or murderer," Berridge replies, "No, sir, I myself am such a sinner; and those who do not come to Christ as such do not come aright. . . If your wealthy neighbour should invite his poor parish widows to dine on Sundays at his house, this invitation would give you no right to dine, nor yet the vicar: you are not poor widows. And supposing you should borrow female clothing—put on a gown and petticoat, and call yourself a poor widow—this female dress would not procure you a right to dine, but might expose you to a cudgel. Yet this is now become the genteel way of coming unto Jesus. Men borrow at a church the garb and language of a Christian, and say most sad things of themselves, while they are

upon their knees, as if they were poor sinners truly, and yet would execrate a preacher who should say the same things in a pulpit which they uttered in a pew. You have heard no doubt of beggars who tie a leg up before they go a begging, and then make hideous lamentations of their lameness. Why this is just your case. When you go to church a praying, which is begging, you tie your righteous heart up, and then make woeful outcry for mercy on us miserable sinners. Oh! sir, these tricks may pass awhile unnoticed; but Jesus Christ will apprehend such cheats at last, and give them their desert."

Berridge delighted in a plain, homely, Saxon style, and both spoke and wrote so as to reach the hearts of those he addressed. Speaking of some of his brethren who practised an opposite course he says: "Why should not gospel authors study to write plain English, since their readers are generally unlearned, and plain words may be found full as graceful and expressive as hard ones? But this matter does not seem to lay upon their thoughts: and some are as fond of hard words as children are of trinkets. Plain English 'happiness' will not suit such—they are wretched still with Roman 'felicity;' nor will plain British 'help' serve them—they are helpless without French 'aid.'"

His letters are fully as amusing and interesting as his writings. The following letter was written to Lady Margaret Ingham, whom he thus addressed:—

"Madam,—On Thursday last I received a bill, value £15, conveyed by the Rev. Mr. Romaine, but presented by your ladyship. It is now converted into clothes for

the use of lay preachers; for which donation I send my hearty thanks. The Lord has promised to return it a hundred fold into your bosom. I believe you can trust Him.

"I wish you had sent with the bill a few minutes of your life of faith, you might have taught me while you clothed others; for, indeed, I am one of those strange folks who set up for journeymen without knowing their master's business, and offer many precious wares to sale without understanding their full value.

"I have got a Master, too, a most extraordinary person, whom I am supposed to be well acquainted with, because He employs me, as a riding pedlar, to serve near forty shops in the country beside my own parish, yet I know much less of my Master than I do of His wares. Often is my tongue describing Him as the fairest of men, while my heart is painting Him as the Witch of Endor; and many big words have I spoken to His credit; yea, I am frequently beseeching people to trust Him with their all, while my heart hath been afraid to trust Him with a groat. Neither, madam, is this all, for such a profound ignoramus am I, that I know nothing of myself as I ought to know, having frequently mistaken rank pride for deep humility, and the working of self-love for the love of Jesus.

"But when my Master first hired me into His service, He kept a brave table and was wondrous free of His liquors. Scarce a day passed without roast meat and claret; then my heart said, 'O, I love Jesus,' and was ready to boast of it too, but at length He ordered His

table to be spread with brown bread from above, and water out of the rock. This my saucy stomach could not brook. My heart thought it prisoners' fare; my tongue called it light food. Now my love to Jesus disappeared, and I found I had been following Him for loaves and fishes, and that, like a true parasite, I loved His cellar and His larder better than His person. Presently after, my Master had detected me in a very dirty trick, which discovered the huge pride and amazing impudence of my heart. Hitherto, I had been kept a stranger to the livery my Master gives to His servants, only I knew he had many rarities, such as diamonds and pearls, to dispose of: accordingly, I had begged a bracelet of Him, a necklace, and an earring, a nosebob, and many other pretty things, which He readily parted with, being of a very generous and noble nature. And will it surprise you to hear that I had the vanity to fix these ornaments on my own rags, intending thereby to make a brave suit to appear at court in.

"Well, to be sure, one day as I was busy mending my rags and putting on my pearls, in comes my Master, and giving me a sudden gripe that went to my heart, He said in an angry tone, 'Varlet! follow me.' I rose and followed Him, trembling while He had me to the house of correction, where he first set my feet in the stocks and stripped off my ornaments. He then took up His nine-tail rod, and laid upon me very stoutly. I roared for mercy, but He declared He should not lay aside His rod till he had scourged every rag off my back; and, indeed, He was as good as His word. Think

how confounded I must be for to stand before Him naked, especially now I saw myself a Zippora in an Ethiopian skin which the rags had concealed from me. For a while I kept my legs, yet, overwhelmed with shame, fell at length, being almost choked with the dust and stench that came out of the rags, in the beating of which, I fell down at my Master's feet and wept. Immediately the rod dropped from His hand and His countenance softened, and with a sweet smile He bid me look up. I did so, and then got a fresh sight of His princely robe, the garment of salvation.

"O, madam, it was a lovely sight, a charming robe, reaching from the shoulders down to the feet, well adapted for covering and defence; yet excellent for beauty and glory, too. 'Here, prodigal Jack,' He said with a smile, 'put this robe on thy back, and then thou mayest come to court and shame an angel. It was wrought with my own hands, and dyed with my own blood. Wear it, and remember me.' I thanked Him and bowed, and I must tell you, madam, although I do not ask you to be a confidant, when my Master opened His robe, He gave me a hasty glance of His person: it was so divinely sweet and glorious, and withal condescendingly humane, that I fell in love with him, and, now, would you think it of me, old fool, as I am, near fifty and as swarthy as a negro, nothing would content me but a wedding; nay, I have frequently proposed the match to my Master, who sometimes only gives me a smile, and sometimes replies, when I can forsake all others then He will take me. The other

day, I asked Him when He would take me to His bosom. He answered, 'when I could lay all at His feet,' and then He has also promised to set open His cellar and larder, and to keep them open. Thus, I am removed out of the book of Proverbs into the book of Canticles, but have got no farther than the first chapter, beginning at the second verse, 'Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth.'

"And now I want, and seem to want nothing else but a closer union with the dear Redeemer; but the world at times diverts my attention from the chief object, but my soul is ever pining after Him, yea, my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. O come quickly! May the Lord daily strengthen your union and communion with the Prince of Peace.

"I am, madam, your ladyship's most obliged and affectionate servant for Christ's sake."

Writing to Lady Huntingdon, May 8th, 1771, he refers in the following humorous manner to Rowland Hill's preaching at Bath: "I find you have got honest Rowland Hill down at Bath: he is a pretty young spaniel, fit for land or water, and has a wonderful yelp. He forsakes father and mother and brethren, and gives up all for Jesus; and I believe will prove a useful labourer, if he keeps clear of petticoat snares. The Lord has owned him much at Cambridge, and in the north, and I hope will own him more abundantly in the west."

The following is dated Everton, April 26th, 1776, and appeared in *The Theological Magazine*, in 1801. The name of the person addressed is not given.

"Your letter was a fortnight in travelling to me, partly occasioned by its tarrying five days at the Tabernacle, when I was at Tottenham; and I concluded you had left Hardwick, or would leave it before my letter could reach you there. I was in London most part of the time, with a cough and cold, and very unfit for a London pulpit, though not disabled from preaching. I find the latter works of a Christian are chiefly furnace-work, out of one fire into another: and when we think the present furnace too hot, the way of making us think it a cool one, is by plunging us into a hotter. I pray for patience often, and should like to have a bushel of it, but do not like the way in which it is given. But God useth means to accomplish His ends, and 'Tribulation is the mean appointed to work patience;' but I am not fond of such means. My old Esau raises outcries at them, and says, If he must learn patience, he should like to learn it in his sleep, without the bustle of tribulation. Yet however unpleasing a furnace is, I find but little growth out of it, and the little I have gained has been out of the fire. Activity in well-doing is a glorious thing, but patient sufferance in well-doing exceeds it: and no man knows much of himself till his locks have well blazed, and his bones have crackled in a furnace. Young cocks crow lustily, and swagger among the poultry, till Shrove-Tuesday; then they come home meek enough, and are glad to hide their heads in a hen-roost. I cannot judge of a Christian soldier from his big words and fierce look, and tall musket, but from his being able to stand fire. Nor do I heed his hopping, or

kicking, or barking, or bawling in the furnace; if he can but keep in it, he is fairly listed, and Jesus will still him, and teach him his exercise at length. As I know something of itinerant troubles, I can sympathize with you; and believe, when a retreat is really wanted, it will be given; but take heed that your heart be not set upon it, else your bed, even there, will be quilted with thorns. A gourd is an useful thing for the head; but when made a revelling place, it will soon breed a worm at the root. Earthly comforts, like roses, grow on a brier, and appear sweeter in the prospect than the enjoyment. If you come into Essex this summer, I shall expect a visit at Everton, and a week or fortnight itineration in Cambridgeshire. Be not discouraged at your trials: Jesus will help you out, and help you through. I send you my heart's love. Grace and peace be with you, my dear friend, and with your affectionate servant."

The following is from "Unpublished Letters," in *The Sunday at Home*, October 6th, 1866:—

"Everton, September 21st, 1795.

"To John Thornton, Esq.

"Dear and honoured sir,

"I am somewhat shy of troubling my betters with visits or letters, which makes me a tardy correspondent and a backward visitor. If this sprang from humility it would have a good root; but it seems to sprout from bashfulness—a fair-faced slip of pride. The forward and bashful temper are contraries, yet both originate from the same source. One pushes forward in hope of

showing itself to advantage; the other lags behind for fear of appearing to disadvantage; one courts honour, the other dreads dishonour from fellow-worms and fellow-sinners. And is not self-exaltation, or pride, the common spring of both these tempers? Unlike they are in their features and carriage, unlike as Esau and Jacob, yet are they not twins from the same mother?

"We are more pleased, indeed, with the bashful than the forward, and for an obvious reason. The bashful temper flatters our pride; it is not encroaching, it is not troublesome, it keeps at a distance, and seems to look on us with reverence; and while we are mounting the ladder of worldly esteem it stays at the bottom, not really contented with a ground station, but afraid to climb, lest it should get a fall and be laughed at. In different constitutions the same principle produces the different effect of forwardness and bashfulness, just as the same sun which softens wax and hardens clay. Perhaps in our fallen state there is not a natural temper but springs from pride, or a desire to exalt self; neither is there any Christian grace on earth but pride will creep into its bosom, and mix with it as freely and imperceptibly as oil with oil.

"No religious act can I do but pride is skulking at my elbow, and much affecting me both by her smiles and frowns. If I chance to pray or preach with a gale, she tickles up vanity; and when I am becalmed, she scoldeth up fretfulness. One while she whispers and tells me I am a fine fellow, and then I am cheery; by-and-by she calls me a fool, and then I am sullen. A weeping

audience stirs up my pride, and so does a sleepy one. I am full as lofty when creeping ashamed from a pulpit, with head hanging down, as when I come away brisk, with a feather in my cap. Indeed, sir, this pride besiegeth my heart, besetteth all my steps, and meets me at every hedge-corner. It has more heads than the Nile, and more shapes than Proteus, and every week I discover some new prints of its foot. Henceforth, if you ask my real name, it is Pride. And such an odd mysterious evil it is, I can even be proud of loathing my pride.

"I am led into this train of writing by a cross, which discovered a new and bitter source of this evil. Almost sixty years I have lived, and never yet thanked God for my teeth! Such a wretch I am! Nor did I know their real worth till last Friday, when I lost an upper tooth in the front of my mouth, which has made my speech so perplexed, disgustful, and painful, that I scarcely know how to bear myself. Twice the labour and breath are required in speaking, yet will not suffice to articulate my words. My mouth seemeth so full of shakes, every sentence comes out with a hiss, and I am quite ashamed to speak at all. Some concern for this loss were not amiss. But why am I ashamed? It is no crime—it is only a misfortune—or, to speak truly, a stroke. Yet so ashamed I am lest my lisping should make me appear ludicrous, that I cannot prevail upon myself to step out a preaching. Is not this pride with a witness? Yet so saint-like is this demon, she wraps herself round with a godly cloak, and pretending great

zeal for Christ's honour, tells me gravely that a lisping tongue would make the word of God ridiculous, as if this was all her concern.

"Well, sir, ever since my tooth came out, Pride and I have been laying our heads together how to remedy this evil. I proposed filling up the cavity with bees-wax—Right, says Pride; but pray let it be white wax: nothing so loathsome as a yellow tooth. Accordingly we filled up the cavity on Sunday with white wax, which served indifferently well in the afternoon; but my pellet dropped out in the morning service, during sermon, and made me conclude abruptly. This sorely disgusted Pride, and made her vehemently propose a journey to London for a new tooth. I made several objections to this; the tooth must be set with golden pivots; the operator would be well paid; nor could I ride such a journey on horse-back, but must take a carriage—the whole expense might amount to ten pounds; and, though otherwise well enough to pass, I had not a spare sum for that purpose. Pooh, pooh, says Pride, can you not lay your case before Mr. Thornton? He will as readily help you as offer his help. Still I objected that the ground of my petition might appear so ludicrous as to excite laughter, and make him cry out, What a sad fool this Vicar of Everton is turned! Sixty years old and wants a tooth! Fie upon him, fie upon him! A new heart would suit him much better. Besides, you know, I do not love to be burdensome to others. That is right, says Pride, and you are excusable. I no more love it than yourself; yet fear of shame will

make even Pride become a beggar. I do therefore insist on your going to London on Monday next, the 25th, returning to Everton when the operation is over, which may be on the Thursday. Nay, do not boggle at the journey. Unless you comply I shall certainly tease you to death, by smiting your heart fiercely every time you utter a lisping word.

"Well, sir, at length I consented to put myself under Lady Pride's direction, and purpose to set out for London on Monday next.

" . . . . The God of peace be with you, and your much obliged and affectionate servant,

"John Berridge."

One of Berridge's greatest friends and the most noted humorist of the day, was

Rowland Hill (1744-1833).

His family was a distinguished one, having borne baronial honours from the times of Edward I. It was famous not merely for its long ancestry, but for its old English energy and good humour, and its sturdy fidelity to the Protestant religion. It had given to London the first Protestant Lord Mayor. It sent five gallant brothers to the field of Waterloo; and when one of them, elevated to the peerage, and afterwards commander-in-chief of the British forces, was received in London, to be presented with a sword by the citizens of London, another member of the family, a soldier in a better cause, was recognized at his side. "Here comes the good uncle," shouted the multitude; "three cheers

for him," and the welkin rung with the proud shouts of the throng; for the veteran Methodist, Rowland Hill, was better known to the people of England, and is yet more familiar to the English world, than the hero Lord Hill.

Hill went to Eton, and afterwards to Cambridge, where he met with considerable opposition on account of his evangelical opinions and earnest efforts to do good. During his trials, Berridge of Everton, sought his acquaintance and inspirited him for his work. They were congenial minds. Berridge's irrepressible humour, combined with heroic zeal and the truest piety, seemed a matured example of Hill's own eccentric but devout nature. Writing to Hill, he said, "Go forth wherever you are invited into the devil's territories; carry the Redeemer's standard with you, and blow the gospel trumpet boldly, fearing nothing but yourself. If you meet with success, as I trust you will, expect clamour and threats from the world, and a little venom now and then from the children. These bitter herbs make good sauce."

Hill sought ordination from no less than six bishops, but all refused to consecrate him. He followed, however, the advice of Berridge, and went forth, wherever the way opened "into the devil's territories." He preached in prisons, in Dissenting chapels, and on the highways. He was often mobbed, saluted with the blowing of horns and ringing of bells; pelted with dirt and eggs; and was once fired at while in the pupit, the ball passing over his head; but none of these things deterred him from publishing abroad the glad tidings of salvation. "His

visits to the paternal home were rendered miserable by the opposition of his parents, but, consoled by his devoted sister, he ceased not to preach in the vicinity; and her gentle influence and charities, aided by his labours and those of his brother," led to blessed results. Two of the family were soon united with them in the faith, beside some of the household servants and neighbours. In his old age, when his fame was in all the churches, he remarked, while walking on the terrace at Hawkstone, to a friend who had noticed the courtesies of the family towards him, "You see how I am received here, but in my youth, how often have I paced this spot bitterly weeping; while by most of the inhabitants of yonder house, I was considered as a disgrace to the family. But," he added, while the tears fell down his aged cheeks, "it was for the cause of my God."

"Hill," says Stephens, "could not fail to be popular. His bearing was dignified and noble, his voice excellent. His discourses were often deeply pathetic, but there was also about him that rich and apt humour which always delights the populace, and which characterised so many early Methodist preachers; a result perhaps as much of their hardy healthful mode of life, their encounters with all kinds of men, and their unsophisticated habits, as of constitutional predisposition. Berridge delighted in Hill; Grimshaw would have pressed him to his heart; Whitfield could hardly write to him without a strain of godly wit. Berridge was not afraid of the young preacher's humour, he had hope from that; but feared his discouragement, or his being 'lifted up' by popularity. 'Fear

nothing but yourself,' he wrote him incessantly; 'study not to be a fine preacher;' Jericho was blown down with rams' horns; look simply to Jesus . . S. S. preached at my house during the holidays; somewhat lifted up at present, I think; but his Master will take him by the nose by-and-by. Make the best of your time, and while the Lord affords travelling health and strong lungs, blow your horn soundly."

"Hill's humour was, doubtless, one of his most popular attractions, and he usually turned it to the best account. He had a remarkably expressive countenance. It is said that every emotion but fear could be indicated by it in an extraordinary degree. His preaching was always direct and inartificial. Sheridan said 'I go to hear Rowland Hill, because his ideas come red-hot from the heart.' Milner, the noted Dean of Carlisle, was so affected under one of his discourses, that he went to him, exclaiming 'Mr. Hill, Mr. Hill, I felt to-day; it is this slap-dash preaching, say what they will, that does all the good.' Lady Huntingdon called him 'a second Whitfield.'"

His brother, Sir Richard, though not contemplating holy orders, had sometimes laboured as a lay preacher, or exhorter; but had yielded to the entreaties of his parents and abandoned such "irregularities." He was sent by his family to persuade his brother Rowland to follow his example. Arriving at Bristol he found that Rowland had gone to Kingswood to preach to the colliers; there he discovered him standing up amid weeping thousands, upon whose blackened cheeks could

be seen the traces of their flowing tears. Rowland saw him in the crowd, and suspecting his errand, preached with the greater energy and effect. Determined to defeat the design, he concluded by shouting, "My brother, Richard Hill, Esq., will preach here to-morrow." The young man did preach, and "instead of returning with his brother to Hawkstone, became his coadjutor in the very work he designed to persuade him to relinquish."

The Bishop of Carlisle had promised to admit Rowland to priests' orders, but owing to an order he received from the Archbishop of York, "not to admit him to a further grade in the church, on account of his perpetual irregularity," Mr. H. missed obtaining "full orders." Referring to this failure he said, "I ran off with only one ecclesiastical boot on."

When some one complained to him, that he did not preach to the elect only, he said, "I don't know them, or I would preach to them. Have the goodness to mark them with a bit of chalk, and then I'll talk to them."

Another complaining of his want of system, said, "Mr. Hill, you have taken us from Dan to Beersheba in your sermon to-day:" he very coolly replied, "Never mind, my friend, it's all holy ground."

"A miser," said he, "is like a pig, of no use till he is dead and cut up."

At a church meeting, an aged female attended who wished to qualify herself for admission to one of the almshouses connected with Surrey Chapel, when the following amusing conversation took place, which

illustrates at once Rowland's ready wit and quick insight into character.

"So you wish to join the church?"

"If you please, sir."

"Where have you been accustomed to hear the gospel?"

"At your blessed chapel, sir."

"Oh! indeed, at my blessed chapel; dear me! and how long have you attended with us?"

"For several years."

"Do you think you have got any good by attending the chapel?"

"Oh! yes, sir. I have had many blessed seasons."

"Indeed! Under whose ministry do you think you were led to feel yourself to be a sinner?"

"Under your blessed ministry."

"Indeed! and do you think your heart is pretty good?"

"Oh, no sir; it is a very bad one."

"What! and do you come here with your bad heart, and wish to join the church?"

"Oh, sir? I mean that my heart is not worse than others; it is pretty good on the whole!"

"Indeed! that's more than I can say; I'm sure mine's bad enough. Well, have you heard that we are going to build some blessed almshouses?"

"Yes, sir, I have."

"Should you like to have one of them?"

"Yes, sir, if you please."

"I thought so. You may go about your business my friend; you won't do for us."

A Dissenting minister once complained to him of the treatment he met with from an ecclesiastical board, and observed that "for his part he did not see the difference between a board and a bench," meaning, that the rule of his board was as stringent as that of the bishops. "Pardon me, my friend," replied Hill, "I will show you a most essential difference between the two: a board is a bench that has no legs to stand upon."

A person consulting him on the subject of entering the ministry, observed that he did not think it right to hide his talents. Mr. Hill, who evidently did not form the same estimate of the applicant's talents as he did himself, replied, "that for his part he thought that the closer he hid them the better."

A lady once requested him to examine her son as a candidate for the ministry, remarking, "I am sure he has a talent, but it is hid in a napkin." At the close of the interview with the young man, Mr. Hill said, "Well, madam, I have shaken the napkin, and I cannot find the talent."

A man once applied to be admitted to the sacrament at Surrey Chapel, and stated that his religious feelings originated in a dream. "Well, that may be," said Rowland, "but we'll tell you what we think of your dreams when we have seen how you walk now you are awake."

A forward and conceited young man, calling upon him at Mr. Jay's, asked him if he heard that he was going to change his sentiments. "No, sir," said Mr. Hill, "I have not; but if you have not fixed the time I

would advise you to do it as near the change of the moon as possible."

On a wet day a number of persons took shelter in his chapel, during a heavy shower, while he was preaching. During the sermon he remarked, "Many people are greatly to be blamed for making their religion a cloak, but I do not think that those are much better who make it an umbrella."

Being much grieved at the conduct of some of his congregation, who were frequently unpunctual in their time of arriving at the sanctuary, he prayed, "O Lord, bless those who are in their places, have mercy upon those who are on the road, and save those who are getting ready to come."

Here is an anecdote illustrating his dislike of idle and illnatured gossip, and the humorous way in which he rebuked it. On one occasion, when Mr. and Mrs. Hill were on a visit to a friend in the country, the evening conversation turned upon a review of the characters of many personal friends and acquaintances. Mr. Hill remained a silent member of the group, and when he found that the verdicts pronounced were not in strict accordance with either truth or charity, he rose and rang the bell. The servant appeared, and he inquired if they had at hand a hearth-brush and a dust-pan. Being answered in the affirmative, he begged to be favoured with them for a few minutes. When they were brought in, he took them and commenced sweeping the carpet, saying that a prodigious quantity of dust and dirt had been scattered that evening, and he was anxious

it should be removed. The hint was taken, and the conversation was directed to other topics.

As his preaching engagements necessarily caused him to travel extensively, he constantly availed himself of the advantage of his carriage and horses. On one occasion a rigid Sabbatarian resorted to a very questionable expedient for rebuking Mr. Hill, and sent in a request for prayer. Mr. H. took it up and began: "The prayers of the congregation are desired—" Having proceeded thus far, he exclaimed, "Umph! for—umph! well I suppose I must finish what I began—for the Rev. Rowland Hill, that he will not go riding about in his carriage on a Sunday." Any ordinary man would have been disconcerted, but he looked up very coolly and said, "If the writer of this piece of folly and impertinence is in the congregation, and will go into the vestry after the service, and let me put a saddle on his back, I will ride him home instead of going in my carriage." When his nephew, Mr. Sidney, asked him if this story were true, he replied,—"Aye, that it is, true enough. You know I could not call him a donkey in plain terms."

Mr. Hill once became surety for a member of his church. The man failed, and the incautious pastor had to pay £1000, the amount of the bond. The same day on which he discharged his liability he called upon a friend who, observing that he was unusually depressed, remarked, "Why, Mr. Hill, what's the matter with you to-day? you seem altogether heavy and uncomfortable. "Heavy, sir," replied Mr. H., "you are quite mistaken then, for I am a thousand pounds lighter than I was yesterday."

Charles Matthews, the famous comedian, frequently went to hear him, and speaking of his sermons says: "I remember him saying, 'The love of our Lord is like a good large round of beef, my brethren; you may cut and come again.' Another time he said, 'You all know how difficult it is to catch a pig by the tail; you will find it equally so to catch the love of our Lord after backsliding.'"

Some time before Mr. Hill's death he chanced to meet a number of ministers in the house of a friend in the country. Dr. Williams's work on the introduction of moral evil into the world having become the subject of conversation, one of the party touched with some animation and brilliancy on the kindred topic of the freedom of the will. His observations were either answered or attempted to be answered, and eventually all present, with the exception of Mr. Hill, were overhead and ears in the subject of metaphysics. There was, however, this difference between the disputants and the angels of Milton: that while the latter "found themselves in wandering mazes lost," each individual of the former, however unintelligible to the rest of the company, was either quite clear to himself or fancied himself to be so. The controversy ended just where it began, without any one bringing over his neighbour to his views, but all individually assured that their theory was the right one. Mr. Hill had all the while been alternately reading a book and looking out at a window commanding a rather pleasant prospect. When the party had finished their discussion, one of them remarked to Mr. Hill that

he had not expressed his opinion on the point in dispute. The remark was echoed and re-echoed by nearly all present; when at last one of them, who was a great stickler for the freedom of the will, asked him point blank his opinion on the subject. "Mr. R———," said Mr. Hill, turning himself to the gentleman in whose house the party were, "I have been amused with a pig of yours which was running about on the green sward below the window, while you were immersed in metaphysics. Does your pig shave?" Every one present looked at the other in utter amazement at the oddity of the question. Mr. R——— replied with a smile, "Shave, Mr. Hill! who ever heard of a pig shaving?" "Then, your pig does not shave, does she?" interrogated the eccentric old gentleman. "No, certainly," replied the other. "And why does she not shave?" was Mr. Hill's next question. This was confusion worse confounded. Mr. R——— knew not what answer to return to the query, and accordingly hesitated as if thinking what he ought to say. "Ah! you can't answer my question," observed Mr. Hill. The continued silence of Mr. R———, as well as that of the company, was a virtual admission that the interrogation was a poser. "Then," said Mr. Hill, after a moment's pause, "I must answer it myself. Your pig does not set up on her hind legs and shave like animals of the biped class, simply because she has not the will." It were impossible to describe the effect which this happy piece of ridicule of those who can dogmatise with so much self-complacency on matters which are utterly beyond their comprehension had on

all present. Every one felt more mortified than another, and each came to a resolution in his own mind that if ever he again engaged in a dispute respecting the freedom of the will it would not be in the presence of Rowland Hill.

He was once called upon to occupy the pulpit of a person whose character was not altogether immaculate. The minister annoyed him by repeatedly apologising because he could not offer him a cassock. "Sir," said Mr. Hill, "I can preach without my cassock, but not without my character: character is of immense importance, sir, to a preacher of God's Holy Gospel."

When he was bowed down with years and on the verge of the grave, he continued to discourse with his friends in his wonted tone of cheerfulness and wit. On his death-bed he was visited by a London merchant, who said, "Sir, I heard of your illness on 'Change." "Any effect on the funds," was the arch, yet innocent rejoinder. Being asked by the Rev. W. Jay, of Bath, if he felt his personal interest in Christ—"I can see," he replied, "more of my Saviour's glory than of my interest in Him. God is letting me down gently into the grave, and I shall creep into heaven under some crevice of the door."

CHAPTER IX.

ROBERT HALL AND ROBERT ROBINSON.

Robert Hall, A.M. (1764-1831).

MR. HALL was born at Ainesby, near Leicester, May 2nd, 1764. At the age of fifteen he was sent to the Baptist Academy at Bristol, where he remained until 1781, when he went to King's College, Aberdeen, where he formed an intimate acquaintance with Sir James Mackintosh, whose tastes and talents were very similar to those of Mr. Hall. Both were so partial to Greek literature that they were named "Plato" and "Herodotus." In 1785, Mr. Hall, then only twenty-one years of age, became assistant Baptist minister at Bristol, and tutor at the Academy at that place. Soon afterwards he became known as the author of a pamphlet entitled "Christianity consistent with a Love of Freedom;" and in subsequent years, his fame as an author continued to rise until he was considered one of the greatest writers of his day. Dugdale Stewart says of his works, "Whoever wishes to see the English language in its

perfection must read the writings of Robert Hall. He combines the beauties of Johnson, Addison, and Burke, without their imperfections;" while Sedgwick declares that for moral grandeur, for Christian truth, and for sublimity, we may doubt whether we have their match in the sacred oratory of any age or country.

Mr. Hall was not less distinguished for his pulpit oratory than for his literary ability. He was a fluent, rapid, and impressive speaker. Those who listened to his ministrations were entranced by his fervid eloquence, which truly disclosed "the beauty of holiness," and melted by the awe and fervour with which he dwelt on the mysteries of death and eternity. So much rhetorical and even poetical brilliancy of imagination have seldom been found united with masculine intellect and extensive acquirements. His published works give but a brief and inadequate picture of his varied talents.

Mr. Hall once visited London for the purpose of hearing Dr. Mason, of New York, deliver a discourse before the London Missionary Society. The extraordinary effect which the masterly address of Mason had produced was the theme, for a time, of general observation, and Mr. Hall was amongst the most enthusiastic of its admirers. Shortly after his return to Leicester, a certain reverend gentleman made him an accidental visit, when Mr. Hall requested him to officiate in his pulpit that evening, assigning, as a reason, that he had just returned from London, oppressed with a sense of the wonderful eloquence of Dr. Mason. The visitor, who is described "as a little pompous personage;

as round as a sugar-barrel—a man of great verbosity, and paucity of thought," after making several excuses, at length overcame his scruples, and ascended the pulpit. At the close of the service, Mr. Hall, with great warmth of feeling, thanked him heartily for his discourse, which, he said, had given him more comfort than any sermon he had ever heard in his life. This assertion inflamed the vanity of the one, and superinduced the sarcasm of the other. The former, with ill-concealed eagerness, urged Mr. Hall to state what there was in the effort that gave him so much pleasure. He replied, "Sir, I have just returned from hearing that great man, Dr. Mason, of New York. Why, sir, he is my very beau ideal of a minister; he reminds me more strongly than any other man of our day of what one might have supposed the Apostle Paul to have been. Such profound thought and majesty of diction, and such brilliancy of illustration, I have never heard equalled; and it left me with such an overpowering conviction of my own insignificancy, that I had resolved never to enter the pulpit again, but," rising up, he energetically exclaimed, "But, thank God! I have heard you, sir, and I feel myself a man again."

Another instance of his reproving assumption is related as follows: A certain noviciate once called to solicit his advice upon what he considered to be a very important matter; to wit, his supposed call to the ministry. This gentleman stated that he was impressed with the idea that it was his duty to obey the call, but that as yet he could see no door open. "No matter for

that, sir," said Mr. Hall; "If the Lord has called you He will open a door." "But, sir, there is one passage which causes me much trouble." "Well, sir, what is it?" "It refers to the hiding of a talent in a napkin." "Oh! my good fellow," said Mr. Hall, "don't let that give you any concern; this little handkerchief of mine [pulling out his own] would cover a score of such talents as yours."

His smartness and skill in controversy were unequalled.

Referring to Bishop Horsley's attack upon Dissenters he says, "His Lordship closes his invectives by presenting a prayer in the spirit of an indictment;" and observes respecting it, "We are happy to hear of his Lordship's prayers, and are obliged to him for remembering us in them; but should be more sanguine in expectation of benefit, if we were not informed the prayers of the righteous only avail much. 'Miserable men,' he tells us, we 'are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.' With respect to the first, we must have plenty of that article, since he has distilled his own; and if the bonds of iniquity are not added, it is only because they are not within the reach of his mighty malice."

He thus refers to the charge of disloyalty which it was the fashion to make against Dissenters in his time, a charge as old as the days of Latimer: "In recent displays of loyalty they (the Dissenters) must acknowledge themselves extremely defective. They have never plundered their neighbours to show their attachment to the King; nor has their zeal for religion

ever broke out into oaths and execrations. They have not proclaimed their respect for regular government by a breach of the laws; or attempted to maintain tranquility by riots. These beautiful specimens of loyalty belong to the virtue and moderation of the High Church party alone, with whose character they perfectly correspond."

This reference of Hall's reminds us of a popular caricature which appeared in the print-shops about this time. It represented a drunken man standing by the side of a prison conversing with a prisoner through the bars. "Mercy," says the gaol-bird, "how fearful to think that our liberty is in danger!" "Aye," hiccuped out the toper, with an oath, "but what I am most consarned about is our blessed religion!"

Mr. Hall's humour was exceedingly good-natured. He carefully avoided making the reputations or personal habits of his friends the subject of his playful remark. He held that natural imperfections and blemishes ought never to be selected as marks for ridicule to shoot its shafts at, and shows the consequence of adopting such a course in his character of Cleander, which is too long for us to quote. He believed that it was well to laugh at all things that may be properly laughed at; but still more commendable to resist all temptations to raise a laugh by personal allusions which hurt the feelings of anyone present, for he knew, as Chesterfield justly observes, this is a pretty sure way to make enemies for ever, for "even those who laugh will, upon reflection, fear and despise us. Wit should be used to please and

not to hurt, shining, like the sun in the temperate zone, without scorching." He would rather break off a story abruptly, if he saw it was likely to cause pain to any individual in the company.

Speaking of his humour, Mr. Jay says: "I never knew him severe upon a preacher, however moderate his abilities, if free from affectation, &c. But as to others, nothing could occasionally be more witty and crushing than his remarks. One evening in a rather crowded place (I was sitting by him), a minister was preaching very finely and flourishingly to little purpose, from the 'white horse,' and the 'red horse,' and the 'black horse,' and the 'pale horse' in the Revelation. He sat very impatiently, and when the sermon closed he pushed toward the door, saying, 'Let me be out of this horse fair.'"

This reminds us of our having read of his attending a Wesleyan missionary meeting where the Rev. Richard Watson was announced to speak. He listened with rapt attention to a masterly speech from that celebrated preacher, who was immediately followed by a speaker of a very different class. Hall sat for some time manifesting considerable disquietude, but at last started to his feet, and, seizing his hat, exclaimed to the friend he had accompanied to the meeting, "Let's go! Let's go! It's always the way with showmen: lions first, and monkeys afterwards!"

In his introduction to the "Apology for the Freedom of the Press," he begs the indulgence of his readers for any imperfection they may find, and "hopes they will

recollect, as an excuse for the warmth of his expressions, it is an apology on a dead friend."

Mr. Hall's raillery was, as we have already said, exceedingly good-natured. He never designedly gave pain to anyone, except where excessive vanity or impertinence made it imperative for him to rebuke it, but in such cases no one could be more severe. On one occasion a preacher had delivered a sermon in Mr. Hall's hearing, and with a disgusting union of self-complacency and indelicacy, asked him what he thought of the sermon; and on Mr. Hall's remaining silent for some time, pressed his question with greater earnestness. The celebrated preacher at length said, "There was one fine passage, sir." "I am rejoiced to hear you say so. Pray, sir, which was it?" "Why, sir, it was the passage from the pulpit into the vestry."

Describing one man's peculiarities of mind, he said, "His mind moves on hinges, not on wheels; there is incessant motion, but no progress."

Some one mentioning that Miss —— had been reviewing a book of Hannah More's, he exclaimed, "She review Mrs. More! Sir, it is like throwing soft peas against a rock."

He disliked Dr. Gill as an author, and when Christmas Evans expressed a wish that the Doctor's works had been published in Welsh, Mr. Hall replied, "I wish they had, sir, I wish they had, with all my heart, for then I should never have read them. They are a continent of mud, sir."

Of Bishop Watson's "Life" he remarked that he regretted having read it, as it lowered his estimate of the Bishop's character; and observed: "Poor man, I pity him. He married public virtue in his early days, but seemed for ever afterwards to be quarrelling with his wife."

He once related with great vivacity an anecdote of a preacher of some account in his day, who in preaching would sometimes weep when his hearers could not see any reason for his so doing. After his death one of his friends happened to examine his manuscripts, and found written in the margins, "Cry here." "Now, I verily believe," said Mr. Hall, "that the Doctor sometimes mistook the place, and that was the cause of what appeared so unaccountable."

This great preacher died February 21st, 1831.

While writing of Robert Hall we have been reminded of his predecessor at Cambridge,

ROBERT ROBINSON,

a large-hearted, fine-spirited, and humorous writer and preacher. His sermons to village congregations are models of strong and forcible English; clear, vigorous, full of calm persuasion, and of quaint and concentrated power. Dr. Price, on hearing him preach in London, declared that he excelled all men he ever heard for engaging the attention and impressing the heart.

His style was colloquial, and his delivery excellent. "He had a musical voice, and was master of all its intonations; wonderful self-possession, and could say

what he pleased, when he pleased, and how he pleased." Paxton Hood styles him the William Cobbett of the pulpit. The following brief specimens of his style are from his "Discourses addressed to Christian assemblies in villages near Cambridge."

In his sermon on "The Christian Religion easy to be understood," he says: "Suppose the Apostle Paul, when he first stood up in the synagogue at Ephesus to teach Christianity to a mixed assembly, had begun by saying, 'Men of Ephesus, I am going to teach a religion which none of you can understand,' would he not have insulted his hearers, disgraced himself, and misrepresented the religion of Jesus Christ? Would they not have said, 'If he does not understand it himself, why does he not sit still, and give place to such as do know what they talk of. If he does understand it himself, why should he affirm we cannot.' When I affirm the Christian religion hath no mysteries, I do not mean that the truths and the duties of Christianity are not connected with other truths and other exercises, which surpass our comprehension; but I affirm that the knowledge of the incomprehensible parts, and the belief of what people please to conjecture about them, though they be parts of our amusement, and perhaps improvement, are yet no parts of that religion which God requires under pain of His displeasure. Suppose I were to affirm there is no secret in mowing grass, and in making, stacking, and using hay; all this is very true, and should anyone deny this, and question me about the manner in which one little seed produces

clover, another trefoil, a third rye-grass, and concerning the manner how all these convey strength and spirit to horses, milk to cows, and fat to oxen, I would reply, all this is philosophy; nothing of this is necessary to mowing, and making, and using hay. I sanctify this thought by applying it to religion. Every good work produces present pleasure and future reward: to perform the work, and to hope for the reward from the known character of the great Master we serve, is religion, and all before and after is only connected with it."

In another sermon, speaking of similitudes as applied to God, such as God having hands, feet, &c., he says: "You sometimes say, a sharp man with a sharp scythe, on a sharp morning, with a sharp appetite, mowed an acre of grass before breakfast, which was sharp work; but you mean, an ingenious man, whose scythe had a keen edge, early in the morning, while it was yet cold, and though he was all the while hungry, cut an acre of grass, which was hard work. Now why do you use the same word to express wit, cold, hunger, hardship, which properly signifies the sharp edge or point of a tool? You do so because you have more thoughts than words to express them, and because there is some one general likeness in which all these things agree."

"When our King Harry the Eighth abolished the shrines, the books of the Cathedral Church at Canterbury proved that in one year the people had offered above nine hundred and fifty pounds to one saint—Thomas, a little more than four hundred to the Virgin Mary, and to Jesus Christ nothing at all."

On one occasion he appears to have been preaching out of doors from the passage "Beware lest anyone through philosophy and vain deceit," for towards the close the following beautiful specimen of homely discourse occurs: "I must not go down from this frame this evening till I have in some way or other conveyed this subject into the minds of all my hearers. The day's work is done, the cattle are at rest, the evening is pleasant, the fragrance of the trees in blossom all around us is highly refreshing, the grass on which many of you sit is an elegant carpet, and you all seem to be very attentive: can I ever choose a time more proper to treat a subject, which though not hard when the Apostle wrote, is became so now by what philosophers have done to it.

"Consider me this evening as doing nothing with this subject except what you all do in saffron-time. You gather the flowers early with great care, and after you get home you leisurely pick off the beautiful blue bell and throw it away for the sake of the more valuable chive in the middle, which you save, and by the help of a kiln bring to the consistency of a dry fibrous cake, which you call saffron, sell to pay your rents, and to maintain your families. Now who is there in this assembly that cannot distinguish between the fact, the use, and the philosophy of saffron?

"Observe first the fact, and the use of knowing the fact. Every man in this parish knows the bulbs which you call heads. Every child knows how to drop them one by one at equal distances into the trenches after

the spadesman. Everybody knows that cattle must be kept off by fences, and that the ground must be clean hoed just before the saffron is expected to spring up. All the month before saffron-time the parish become prophets, and half the poor men spring up in the morning before it is well morning to look after their old benefactors the clouds. No rain, no saffron. Thus a fine shower makes all the children smile in hopes of a plentiful saffron-time, and consequently new clothes against winter. When the time comes, how cheerfully you rise by the moon or the stars, flock into the fields and pick up the flowers before the sun is up! Presently, the tables and the kilns are covered with chives, and the end of all is, the whole is exchanged for money, money for clothes, a bible and a hymn-book, and these convey instruction to you and your families to fear God and keep his commandments, which make you live soberly and die peaceably, in hopes of a joyful resurrection.

"Now here is a set of facts and uses all which you perfectly understand, and your knowledge in this view is complete: but the philosophy of all these facts is a very different thing. Some have no knowledge at all of it, and they that know most of it, are only as far above others as a man upon a mole-hill is above one of his own size on level ground. Were a man inclined to spoil your saffron trade, he could not take a more proper method than to require you to account for the size, and shape, and colour, and scent of saffron; and could you be prevailed on to waste the whole saffron-

time in disputing on questions of this kind, instead of practising what knowledge you have about facts and uses, you would be spoiled to all intents and purposes. This is not only the case with the knowledge of flowers, it is the same with all other things in the world. We know the uses of things, but we do not know the nature of them. As it is with the saffron-grower in his rood of land, so it is with the mariner who sails all round the globe; and as it is with the common observation, so it is almost with the deepest speculation: a glass can carry the eye a little way, and intense thought can carry reason a little way further; but the discovery of vast and boundless tracts beyond will always leave a studious man very modest, because it will always leave him very near his plain neighbours."

He then applies this reasoning to the facts that man is a sinner; that there is a God; that he sent his Son to die for sinners, &c., and shows how men may be spoilt by vain philosophy. Would that modern teachers could be persuaded to imitate Robinson's example in their address to the country people! We heard recently of one young aspirant for pulpit popularity, who, on being told by an aged and venerable person that his addresses were couched in a style that few could understand, replying, "Oh, I don't care about the ignorant understanding me: I would much rather be appreciated by three intellectual men in my congregation than applauded by all the others." Poor fellow! the truly "intellectual" did appreciate him, though not in the manner he desired.

We had marked several passages in his "Morning Exercises," but must refrain from quoting them. His miscellaneous works, in four volumes, abound with humour. His "History and Mystery of Good Friday" is full of smart and poignant irony, while his "Political Catechism" is exceedingly ingenious and witty. Nor did he confine his humour to his printed discourses, but on more than one occasion employed it in the pulpit with no small effect. His strong Dissenting opinions provoked the opposition of the gownsmen at Cambridge, who frequently manifested their dislike of him in a very discreditable manner, but seldom without receiving a smartly administered reproof. One hot summer's day, for instance, a clergyman, fifty or sixty years of age, entered when he was nearly in the middle of his sermon. He walked to the table-pew, took his seat, and began quizzing the congregation to the great annoyance of the ladies. Robinson's spirit was stirred within him. Having paused long enough to regain thoroughly the diverted attention of the audience, he proceeded thus: "I was speaking about complex and simple ideas, but as few are acquainted with logical terms, I will give an illustration or two. If walking in the vicinity of the India House, I were to meet a person wearing powder and silver buckles, and carrying a gold-headed cane, I should have the complex idea of a wealthy merchant. This would be made up of a number of simple ideas;" and the peculiarities of a successful merchant were enumerated. "Again, suppose I walked in Pall Mall, I might there meet some one wearing a cocked hat, a

red coat, gold epaulets, &c., and I should have the complex idea of an officer of high rank in the army. This, as in the former case, includes a number of simple ideas. Once more: if I were walking near St. Paul's, I might see a portly gentleman, in a shovel hat, full bottomed wig, black coat, black silk stockings, silver buckles [describing the dress before him], and I should have the complex idea of a venerable dignitary of the Church of England. As in the former cases, this complex idea would include many simple ideas, the gentleman, the scholar, the divine;" and then followed an eloquent description of the good minister of Jesus Christ. "But, my friends, you may have forgotten the text. I will repeat it. 'Judge not according to outward appearance, but judge righteous judgment.'" Fixing his keen eye on the stranger in the table-pew, he began to reverse the picture, and describe impertinence and folly in a black dress. The intruder vanished in haste.

Robinson's strong common-sense not only led him to use well chosen words and avoid "twaddle," but made him keenly alive to the absurdity of treating Scripture as it was too commonly treated in his time. The following account of a visit he received one Saturday afternoon from the Rev. Clement Carnifex, who at that time lived at "Enon, near Salim, because there was much water there," is too good to be omitted.

Carnifex.—"I am come from a great distance to hear you preach to-morrow."

Robinson.—"Then, brother, you shall preach for me."

C.—"O no, no; I cannot preach in Mr. Robinson's pulpit."

R.—"Why not? my pulpit is a wooden one; is not yours?"

C.—"Yes, sir; but I cannot preach to Mr. Robinson's people."

R.—"Why not? my people are like other people—some good, some bad—are not yours?"

C.—"Yes, sir."

R.—"Well, then I daresay the sermons last Sunday at home would be very suitable. What were they?"

C.—"Why in the morning I preached from Esther vii., 9.—'Hang him thereon.'"

R.—"Very well, brother. You had a good opportunity of showing that the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Did you take it up in that light, brother."

C.—"No, sir; I considered Haman as the devil, who is always endeavouring to injure the Lord's people, and would be glad to destroy them."

R.—"Very good, brother; nothing can be more suitable. Here is old Nanny, the pew-opener at our place: she can never get to the meeting in time, for she says that the devil always finds her something or other to do. Then there is old Farmer Jones, who lives about three miles off. He says that before he has got half-way to the meeting, the devil tells him that somebody is breaking into his barns, and he is obliged to return. Now, brother, if you could prove you have hanged the devil, nothing in the world could be more suitable.

That will do for the morning. Now, what is the afternoon subject, brother?"

C.—"Why, sir, in the afternoon I preached from 2 Kings, xviii, 36, 'Answer him not.'"

R.—"Very well, brother. You have an opportunity of showing not only that the king's business requires haste, but that it is sometimes good policy not to reveal the secrets of State affairs. Did you handle it that way brother."

C.—"No, sir. I endeavoured to show that the devil would be always harassing and distressing the dear people of God; but the best way was to pay no regard to his temptations. 'Answer him not a word.'"

R.—"Ha! ha! brother; that will never do. Now, in the morning you see, according to your sermon, you hanged the devil; that was very fortunate; but in the afternoon you brought him to life again. At any rate it must be wrong for these two subjects to follow each other."

Robinson settled at Cambridge without inquiring what he would receive as salary, but his church paid him the first year the munificent sum of three pounds, twelve shillings, and sixpence. As there was no prospect of so poor a people being able to maintain him, he engaged in farming with some success. The following racy and vivacious letter will show with what industry, spirit, and good humour he pursued his multitudinous avocations:

"Chesterton, May 26, 1784.

"Old friend,—You love I should write folios: that depends upon circumstances, and if the thunderstorm

lasts, it will be so: but what a sad thing it is to be forced to write, when one has nothing to say! Well, you have an apology for not writing—that is, a diary of one day.

"Rose at three o'clock—crawled into the library—met one who said, 'Yet a little while is the light with you: walk while ye have the light—the night cometh when no man can work—my father worketh hitherto, and I work.'—Rang the great bell, and roused the girls to milking—went up to the farm, roused the horse-keeper—fed the horses while he was getting up—called the boy to suckle the calves, and clean out the cowhouse—lighted the pipe, walked round the garden to see what was wanting there—went up the paddock to see if the weaning calves were well—went down to the ferry, to see whether the boy had scooped and cleaned the boat—returned to the farm—examined the shoulders, heels, traces, chaff, and corn of eight horses going to plough—mended the acre staff—cut some thongs, whip-corded the boys' plough whips—pumped the troughs full—saw the hogs fed—examined the swill-tubs, and then the cellar—ordered a quarter of malt, for the hogs want grains and the men want beer—filled the pipe again, returned to the river, and bought a lighter of turf for dairy-fires, and another of sedge for ovens—hunted up the wheelbarrows, and set them a trundling—returned to the farm, called the men to breakfast, and cut the boys bread and cheese, and saw the wooden bottles filled—sent one plough to the three-roods, another to the three half-acres, and so on—shut the

gates, and the clock struck five—breakfasted—set two men to ditch the five roods—two more to chop sads, and spread about the land—two more to throw up muck in the yard—and three men and six women to weed wheat—set on the carpenter to repair cow-cribs, and set them up till winter—the wheeler to mend up the old carts, cart-ladders, rakes, &c., preparatory to hay-time and harvest—walked to the six-acres, found hogs in the grass—went back, and sent a man to hedge and thorn—sold the butcher a fat calf, and the suckler a lean one—the clock strikes nine—walked into the barley-field—barleys fine, picked off a few tiles and stones—and cut a few thistles—the peas fine, but foul; the charlock must be stopped—the tares doubtful; the fly seems to have taken them—prayed for rain, but could not see a cloud—came round to the wheat-field—wheats rather thin, but the finest colour in the world—sent four women on to the shortest wheats—ordered one man to weed the ridge of the long wheats—and two women to keep rank and file with him in the furrows—thistles many—blue bottles no end—traversed all the wheat field—came to the fallow field—the ditchers have run crooked—set them straight—the flag-sads cut too much, rush-sads too little, strength wasted, shew the men how to three-corner them—laid out more work for the ditchers—went to the ploughs—set the foot a little higher, cut a wedge, set the coulter deeper, must go and get a new mould-board against to-morrow—went to the other plough—picked up some wool, and tyed over the traces—mended a horse-tree,

tyed a thong to the plough-hammer—went to see which lands wanted ploughing first—sat down under a bush—wondered how any man could be so silly as to call me 'reverend'—read two verses, and thought of his loving-kindness in the midst of his temple—gave out 'Come all harmonious tongues,' and set Mount Ephraim tune—rose up—whistled—the dogs wagged their tails, and on we went—got home—dinner ready—filled the pipe—drank some milk—and fell asleep—woke by the carpenter for some slats, which the sawyer must cut—the Reverend Mess. A. in a coat, B in a gown of black, and C. in one of purple, came to drink tea, and to settle whether Gomer was the father of the Celts and Gauls and Britons, or only the uncle—proof sheet from Mr. Archdeacon—corrected it—washed—dressed—went to meeting, and preached from, 'the end of all things is at hand, be ye sober and watch unto prayer,'—found a dear brother 'reverence' there, who went home with me, and edified us all out of Solomon's Song, with a dish of tripe out of Leviticus, and a golden candlestick out of Exodus.—Really and truly we look for you and Mrs. Keene and Mr. Dore at harvest; and if you do not come, I know what you all are.—Let Mr. Winch go where he can better himself. Is not this a folio? And like many other folios?.....

"Henry Keene, Esq." "R. Robinson."

The intelligent reader (adds Mr. Dyer, his biographer), will perceive that one object of the preceding letter, is to rally useless priests, idle and unprofitable professors of religion, and pompous scribblers about nothing.

Mr. Robinson had often expressed a wish to die "softly, suddenly, and alone," and his wish was granted him. His health being in a declining state, he was induced to take a journey to Birmingham, with the hope of recovery. He arrived there June 5th, 1790, preached twice the following day, and though evidently suffering from great weakness, his conversation was both pleasant and facetious. On Monday he was seized with a difficulty in breathing, but on Tuesday was better and retired to rest without complaining. On Wednesday morning he was found dead in his bed, without the bed-clothes being the least discomposed, or the slightest sign of pain or suffering on his features. He had quietly "fallen asleep."

CHAPTER X.

Christmas Evans (1766-1838).

ALL writers on the religious condition of Wales during the seventeenth century, agree in describing the people as little better than the heathen, wallowing in their sins, unwarned and unrebuked. Not one in a hundred could read, and a copy of the Scriptures was as great a rarity in the mansions of the rich as in the homes of the poor. Ignorance and licentiousness universally prevailed.

But this benighted land was at length visited with a great revival, which completely changed the face of the country and the habits of the people. Religious exercises took the place of drunken orgies, and preaching services superseded races, fairs, and plays. The hills and valleys echoed with hymns of praise rising from the lips and hearts of assembled thousands.

This great change, like all similar ones, was brought about by the earnest and simple preaching of the gospel, by a band of men whose hearts God had touched. And from the Revival sprang a host of

evangelists unequalled in their day for popularity and success. We have but to mention Williams of Wern, John Elias, and Christmas Evans, in proof of this. These men were "great amongst the greatest of all ages," and it is not too much to say that for power and impressiveness we have had nothing like them for a long time.

Among the preachers of this day none stood higher than the subject of this chapter. He was born in the parish of Llandyssul, of poor parents, on Christmas Day, 1766, and on that account received the name by which he was afterwards so well known.

At the age of nine he lost his father, and soon afterwards his mother was suddenly removed by death. Left an orphan, he went to reside with an uncle, a hard and covetous man, who put him to the most servile employments. Almost without a friend or home he found his way to the chapel of an eccentric minister named David Davies, who soon discovered that the rough and neglected herd-boy possessed more than ordinary ability, and kindly assisted him in the improvement of his mind.

Evans's perceptor was a most singular being. Possessed of a considerable fund of learning, he was utterly regardless of all outward appearances. His "mind to him his kingdom was." "He was a man of huge size, and his massive head was adorned with long flaxen hair, which hung down over his broad shoulders." In wet weather he would be covered with straw, which was bound about his body with ropes. Arrayed in this

condition he was one day met by a fellow poet, who addressed him on the spur of the moment in the following lines :—

"O bard and teacher, famed afar !
Such sight I never saw ;
It ill becomes a house like yours
To wear a roof of straw."

To which Davies replied,—

"The rain is falling fast, my friend ;
You know not what you say :
A roof of straw, methinks, does well
Beseem a house of clay."

It was not long before Christmas was called upon to take part in the exercises of prayer and exhortation, and after a while he was sent to preach at a meeting held in a cottage. His sermon delighted the audience, who were loud in their praises of its ability; unfortunately, however, it was discovered that the youthful preacher had repeated a discourse of Bishop Beveridge's.

His admirers, however, were not disconcerted, but took their stand on the excellency of his prayer. Their boasting would have been cut short had they known that the prayer was borrowed too.

Though we have no desire to excuse the young evangelist's conduct in borrowing a sermon, we nevertheless think he was to be commended in having selected a good one. We recollect hearing an old gentleman say, on one occasion, when he had been listening to a borrowed discourse, "I don't complain so much that the sermon was another's, but that it was such a poor thing." This was very different from the

opinion expressed by an elderly minister, an acquaintance of our early days, who, after asking how a young preacher he knew was succeeding, replied, on being told that he was "preaching some great sermons," "Ha! ha! he will never be little while anybody's great."

Christmas Evans soon saw the folly of attempting to shine in borrowed plumes, and strove by hard study to qualify himself for the work of the ministry. A dispute with a young man on the subject of baptism led him to join the Baptists, and he was immersed in the river Dubar by Timothy Thomas, the Baptist minister of Aberduar.

This Mr. Thomas, says Mr. Heath, in his sketch of Christmas Evans, to which we are indebted for several facts and illustrations, "was a staunch Calvinist as well as a Baptist, but he was as kind and genuine a man as his Presbyterian brother at Castell Hywell, and almost as much a character. He was muscular both in his arguments and his practice. His own mind had been made up long ago on every theological question, so that he rarely condescended to argument, preferring to extinguish his adversary with a clever retort. He was nevertheless a man of noble disinterestedness. Half farmer, half preacher, he almost entirely supported himself. Prodigious in labours, he was prompt, fervid, decisive—equal to any emergency, temporal or spiritual. He rode the best horse in the district, and thought nothing of felling an assailant. A story is told of a member of his church who was accused of having

knocked down a Unitarian. The delinquent had to stand his trial before the church. 'Well, Thomas,' said the pastor, 'I am sorry to hear that you are charged with some misconduct during the last week; let us hear all about it.' The accused made a clean breast of it, relating how he had been having a little beer with Jack, the miller, at the 'Red Dragon,' how Jack had put forth Unitarian sentiments, and being urged by argument and beer had uttered something very like blasphemy, which so incensed him that he there and then knocked Jack down. 'Well, brother,' said this fine old specimen of a muscular Christianity—'well, brother, I cannot say you did the right thing; but I must say this, I believe I should have done so too: go and sin no more.'" It was under the ministry of this worthy that Mr. Evans embraced Calvinistic opinions.

He now went forth with his Bible, which beside Bunyan's Works and Burkit's "Exposition on the New Testament," was his only engine of war; and so popular were his ministrations that he received an invitation to the pastorate of Lleyn, with the munificent salary of seventeen pounds a year and a house to live in. He now felt himself able to take a wife, and sought and obtained the hand of Catharine Jones, a woman of great courage and perseverance. She had a strong mind and great aptitude for theological studies. Though her husband's income for the greater part of her married life never exceeded thirty pounds, yet she gave food to the hungry poor and money to the necessitous, and travelled with her husband through storms of snow, and

hail, and rain, crossing dangerous ferries, and passing through wild and desolate places. Her practical sagacity was great, indeed she was, for three and thirty years, just such a help-meet as her husband needed.

One day he was talking of living by faith. "Catharine *fach*," he said, playfully, "you never mind the potatoes; put your trust in Providence, and all will be well." "I tell you what we'll do, Christmas," she replied; "you go and sit down on the top of Moel y Gest, waiting for Providence, and I'll go and hoe the potatoes; and we shall see to which of us Providence will come first."

We reluctantly pass over the thrilling story of his itinerant life, with its perils and persecutions, its trials and triumphs: it is time for us to give a few specimens of his preaching, which abounded with humour and sparkled with wit. It must be remembered that these specimens are but translations, and give but an imperfect idea of the beauty and force of the original. One of his most celebrated sermons was on "The Spirit wandering in dry places, seeking rest and finding none."

"I see, said he, "the unclean spirit rising like a winged dragon, circling the air, and seeking for a resting-place. Casting his fiery glances toward a certain neighbourhood he spies a young man, in the bloom of life and rejoicing in his strength, seated on the front of his cart and going for lime. 'There he is,' said the old dragon. 'I will throw into his bosom sparks from hell. I will set all his passions on fire. I will lead him from bad to worse, until he shall perpetrate every sin. I

will make him a murderer. His soul shall sink, never again to rise, in the lake of fire.'

"By this time I see him descend with a fell swoop towards the earth, but nearing the youth, the dragon heard him sing:

"'Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,
Hold me with Thy powerful hand.
Strong Deliverer,
Be Thou still my strength and shield.'

"'A dry, dry place this,' says the dragon, and away he goes. But I see him hovering about in the air, and casting about for a suitable resting-place. Beneath his eye there is a flowery meadow, watered by a crystal stream, and he descries among the kine a maiden about eighteen years of age, picking up here and there a beautiful flower. 'There she is,' says Apollyon, intent upon her soul; 'I will poison her thoughts. She shall stray from the paths of virtue. She shall think evil thoughts, and become impure. She shall become a lost creature in the great city, and at last I will cast her down from the precipice into everlasting burnings.'

"Again he took his downward flight; but he no sooner came near the maiden than he heard her sing the following words, with a voice that might have melted the rocks:—

"'Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee.
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me.'

"'This place is too dry for me,' says the dragon, and

off he flies. Now he ascends from the meadow like some great balloon, but very much enraged, and breathing forth 'smoke and fire,' and threatening ruin and damnation to all created things.

"'I will have a place to dwell in," he says, 'in spite of decree, covenant, or grace.' As he was thus speaking he beheld a woman, 'stricken in years,' busy with her spinning-wheel at her cottage door. 'Ah, I see,' says the dragon, 'she is ripe for destruction; she shall know the bitterness of the wail which ascends from the mouth of hell!' He forthwith alights on the roof of the cot, when he hears the old woman repeat with trembling voice, but with heavenly feeling, the words,—'For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee.'

"'This place is too dry for me,' says the dragon, and away he goes again.

"One might have imagined that the unclean spirit would have lost all hope and courage with so many disappointments, but it was not so; he was determined to find a resting-place. So he arose again to look out for another spot in which he might have a better welcome. In yonder cottage lies old Williams, slowly wasting away. He has borne the heat and the burden, and altogether has had a hard life of it. He has very little reason to be thankful for the mercies he has received, and has not found serving God a very profitable business. 'I know I can get him to 'curse God and die.'' Thus musing, away he flew to the sick man's bedside; but as he listened he heard the words,—

'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.'

"Mortified and enraged, the dragon took his flight, saying, 'I will return to the place from whence I came.'"

Another very popular and effective sermon was on "The Journey in search of the Young Child," in which he describes the Wise Men from the East enquiring for the new-born King of the Jews. Riding on asses they come to a turnpike gate and earnestly ask of the gate-keeper—"Do you know anything of the young child?" The gateman comes to the door; and supposing them to have asked the amount of the toll says, "O, three-halfpence an ass to pay." "We do not ask what is to pay," reply they, "but do you know anything of the young child?" "No, I know nothing in the world," answers he; "but there is a blacksmith's shop a little further on: inquire there." Selfishness knew nothing of the child. Cheerfully they paid the money; mournfully they pursued their way, until they came to a blacksmith's forge. Horses and asses were there, waiting to be shod. Their asses were in good trim, but they passed through the crowd. "Tell us," said they, "know you anything of the young child—our child?" But the blacksmith misunderstood them. "You must wait till your turn comes," said he. "The child," said they; "do you not see his star? Our child—where does the young child lay?" The blacksmith thought them mad, and laughed loudly. They hastened on.

Business could tell them nothing of the child. They came to a city. They went to a news-room, and asked to look at a paper, and they enquired of the keeper about the child, and he told them to look in one corner there, Births, Deaths, and Marriages. Earnestly they looked. No news. "But," said they, "he is born; we have seen his star. Have you not heard of the child, the wonderful child?" No, no! Pleasure and news knew nothing about Him. "But," said the keeper, "there is a strange old man lives down in a singular house in yonder street. He talks much about a child that is to come. Go thither, he may tell you." They went and entered a singular building, and met a singular man, in robe and mitre, and said they, "Oh, if you know, tell us, tell us; where does the young child lay? He is born, and we would worship Him." "Ah," said he, "I will see;" and he took down a mysterious book, written with strange and wonderful characters, and then said he, "He is not born. Go, I will tell you when. Yes, He shall come—the wonderful Counsellor, the everlasting Immanuel, the Prince of Peace. But not yet, not yet. I will tell you when." The Jew could not guide them to the young child. But they replied, "He is born, we have seen his star." "No," he said again; "there is one by yonder water who preaches that he is born, but he is an impostor. Fly from him, and wait for me." But they hurried to the river's brink, and saw a wild man there, clothed in camel's hair, attended by a crowd of listeners, and then pressing through, they said to him, "Can you tell us of

the young child?" And he said, "Come with me, and behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." The anachronism in this parable is obvious, but for all that it vividly describes the hindrances of those who are truly seeking the Saviour, and directs them to the only source of salvation—the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He delighted in preaching the Gospel to the poor, and offering its blessings to the neglected and despised. Many of his hearers were of the lowest type of humanity, brutalised by long habits of debauchery and sin. To bring home the truth to their minds and hearts, he sometimes employed the homeliest words and illustrations he could find. "If," says Mr. Heath, "we forget this we may be inclined often to accuse him of a coarse and ludicrous representation of solemn truths, when, if we could only realise the daily thoughts and tone of mind of those he was addressing, we should be filled with admiration at the wonderful power which could so adapt itself that it was able to get a lodgment for heavenly ideas in minds rendered stupid by years of heavy work and much beer. Here is an illustration of the way in which he reached the heart of the poor hind, whose sole relief from daily toil, whose sole idea of anything worth living for, was connected with sundry half-pints at the 'Parting Pot.'

"Bill ran away from service and left his master's house, having served there for many years. Wandering about from place to place, he took it into his head that he would go [illegible] just to see what was going on

there. So he went. But who should meet with him unexpectedly, as he was walking along one of the streets, but his old master! When Bill saw him he looked very shy, gave short answers, and made it pretty clear that he didn't wish to have much talk with him. 'Well, well, Bill,' said his master, 'this will never do; if we must part, let us part friends. Come with me.' 'So they both set off towards Cross-street, and called at the 'Lion of the Tribe of Judah.' Having seated themselves, the master ordered in some of the wine of 'Eshcol,' from the wine-press of Calvary. The best kind was brought; and when Bill had drunk but little of it, he starts on his feet, the tears trickling down his cheeks, gives his right hand to his master, crying out,—'Master, friends for ever; friends until death, my dear master! friends through all eternity! I will go home with you, my dear master. I will spend my life in your service for ever and ever. Do you forgive me, dear master?' 'Yes Bill. Come back—come back. Welcome, welcome home. Thou shalt fare as of old. Thy sins and thy iniquities will I remember no more.'"

He was from all accounts, wonderfully pictorial and allegorical in his preaching, the adaptability of which was most remarkable. "Many of his sermons were translations of our Lord's Parables into Welsh; he cast away Oriental dress, and darted an eye into the spirit and meaning of the parable, and presented it in such a light that all hearing must see it too. What, for instance, would you say if you saw the Prodigal Son quitting his father's house, in best beaver hat,—blue

coat and brass buttons, and top boots; this at that time was the topmost height of finery in Wales, with a dangling spy glass, and a cigar. And when he preached this sermon near Llandiloes, and directing his finger in the open air to a distant mountain, described the father as seeing him while yet a great way off; the heads of the thousands of the congregation were turned in the direction of the preacher's finger, expecting to see the father coming down from the hills too. Sometimes his parables entered more entirely into the pure region of fable; after a most eccentric fashion, he described the faithful minister and the inconsistent office-bearers, in a church, under the ideas of a dog and a tea-kettle,—a kettle of water boiling on the fire; the water must lift the lid, and a few drops fell upon a dog sleeping upon the hearth; he gave an angry growl; looked up and soon went to sleep again. A very little time elapsed before again the boiling spray fell upon him, and this time more heavily than before; he uttered another growl, but still slept on; what could a kettle of water care for a growling dog? the fire burnt on,—the water boiled on,—it boiled furiously over; the dog in agony darted up to revenge himself on the kettle, and received the full volume of boiling water for his pains. Thus Mr. Evans chose to illustrate the relative position of a aithful ministry to unfaithful church members and officers."

"From Mr. Stephens' 'Life of Christmas Evans,'" says Mr. Hood, "we will extract two of his parables as specimens of his usual style; and first, the parable of

the Vine Tree, the Cedar Tree, the Thorn, and the Bramble. The Trees of Lebanon held a council to elect a king on the death of their sovereign the Yew Tree. It was agreed to offer the sovereignty to the Cedar; at the same time, in the event of the Cedar's declining it, to the Vine Tree, and then to the Olive Tree. They all refused it; the Cedar said, 'I am high enough already.' The Vine said, 'I prefer giving forth my rich juice to gladden man's heart.' In like manner the Olive was content with giving its fruit, and would receive no other honour. Recourse was then had to the Thorn. The Thorn gladly received the office, saying to itself, 'I have nothing to lose but this white dress, and a berry for pigs; while I have prickles enough to annoy the whole wood.' The Bramble rebelled against the Thorn, and a fire of pride and envy was kindled, which at length wrapped the whole forest in one blaze. Two or three vain and high-minded men have frequently broken up the peace of congregations, and by striving for the mastery have inflicted on the cause of religion incalculable injuries, when they have had no more fitness for rule than the white thorn or the prickly bramble."

Again, we have the Parable of the Three Birds. "A gentleman kept in his palace a Dove, a Raven, and an Eagle. There was but little congeniality or friendship between them. The Dove ate its own proper food, and lodged in the aviary. The Raven fed on carrion, and sometimes would pick out the eyes of an innocent lamb, and had her nest in the branches of a tree. The Eagle was a royal bird. It flew very high and was of

a savage nature. It would care nothing to eat half a dozen doves for its breakfast. It was considered the chief of all birds, because it could fly higher than all. All the doves feared its beak, its angry eyes, and sharp talons. When the gentleman threw corn in the yard for the dove, the raven would be engaged in eating a piece of flesh, part of a lamb haply, and the eagle in carrying a child from its cradle to its eyrie. The Dove is the evangelical, industrious, godly, professor; the Raven is the licentious and unmanageable professor, and the eagle the high-minded and self-complacent one."

Like many of his fellows Christmas frequently met with cases of niggardliness, which excited his indignation, and led to a smart reproof. Once, for instance, after preaching a sermon for which he received a miserable fee, an old woman said to him, "Christmas, *bach*, mayest thou be recompensed in the resurrection of the just." "Aye, Sally, *fach*," he replied, "but how am I to live until I get there, and my poor horse too? and for him, you know, there will be no resurrection."

He was very fond of his old horse, which, like his master, was getting into years. A perfect understanding existed between the two, and during his long and wearisome journeys the preacher would cheer the solitary road by holding imaginary conversations with his faithful friend. The horse would prick up his ears the moment his master began to speak, and make a kind of neighing reply, while if the journey were long, or the roads unusually heavy, the preacher would

coaxingly say: "Only one low mountain more, and there will be capital oats, excellent water, and a warm stable—come up, lad."

"Only one low mountain more," says Mr. Heath, "and then home to the eternal rest. April, 1838, came, and the great evangelist set out on his last journey. With his wife and a young friend he left Carnarvon, traversed Wales, and preached at the Association held at Argoed in Monmouthshire. Taken ill at Tredegar a few days after, he recovered sufficiently to pursue his journey through Glamorganshire, arriving at Swansea on Saturday, July 11th. Here he preached twice on Sunday, and again on Monday evening.

"As he descended the pulpit he was heard to say 'This is my last sermon.' In the course of the evening he was again taken ill. Tuesday and Wednesday passed away in an alternation of hope and fear, when on the morning of Thursday, July the 20th, 1838, he called his friends around him and bore his testimony in the following words:—'I am about to depart. I have laboured in the sanctuary for three-and-fifty years, and my comfort is that I have not laboured without blood in the vessel. Preach Christ to the people, dear brethren. Look at me in myself and in my preaching, I am nothing but a lost and ruined man; but look at me in Christ, I am heaven and salvation.' Then with triumphant voice he repeated a verse of a Welsh hymn. The shadow of death was upon him, and from a state of apparent unconsciousness he awoke to cry, 'Good-

bye! drive on!'" They were his last words: "the chariot of Israel had come with its horses of fire," and the brave, genial, grand old man entered into rest.

While on the subject of Welsh preaching we give the following account of one of the lesser lights of the pulpit of the principality, Sammy Breeze, taken from the Rev. Paxton Hood's "Lamps, Pitchers, and Trumpets," who gives the following amusing description of one of the exploits of that worthy.

"He came periodically from the mountains of Cardiganshire to Bristol, and spoke with tolerable efficiency in English. A friend of ours was in the chapel, when, as was not unusual, two ministers, Sammy Breeze and another, were to preach. The other took the first place—a young man with some tints of academical training, and some of the livid lights of a then only incipient Rationalism on his mind. He took for his text—'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned;' but he condoned the heavy condemnation, and, in an affected manner, shaded off the darkness of the doom of unbelief very much in the style of another preacher, who told his hearers that he feared lest they should be doomed to a place which good manners forbade him from mentioning! The young man also grew sentimental and 'begged pardon' of an audience rather more polite than usual, for the sad statement made in the text. 'But, indeed,' said he, 'he that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not,—indeed, I regret to

say—I beg pardon for uttering the terrible truth—but indeed he shall be sentenced to a place which here I dare not mention.'

"Then rose Sammy Breeze. He began—'I shall take the same text to-night which you have just heard. Our young friend has been fery foine to-night; he has told you some very polite things. I am not fery foine, and I am not polite; but I will preach a little bit of Gospel to you, which is this—'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be tamned'—and I begs no pardons.' He continued—'I do look round on this chapel; and I do see people all fery learned and intellectual. You do read books, and you do study studies; and fery likely you do think that you can mend God's Book, and are fery sure that you can mend me. You have great what you call thoughts and poetries. But I will tell you one little word, and you must not try to mend that—but if you do it will be all the same. It is this, look you—'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be tamned,'—and I begs no pardons. And then I do look round your chapel, and I do see you are fine people, well-dressed people, well-to-do-people. You are not only pious but you have fery fine hymn books and cushions, and some red curtains, for I do see you are fery rich, and you have got your monies, and are getting fery proud. But I will tell you it does not matter at all—not one little bit—for I must tell you the truth, and the truth is —'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be tamned'—and I begs no pardons. 'And now,'

continued the preacher, 'you will say to me, What do you mean by talking to us in this way? Who are you, sir? And now I will tell you. I am Pilly Preeze. I have come from the mountains of Cardiganshire on my Master's business, and His message I must deliver. If you will never hear me again, I shall not matter much; but while you shall hear me, you shall hear me, and this is His word to me, and in me to you—'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be tamned'—and I begs no pardons.'

"But the scene in the pulpit was a trifle to the scene in the vestry. There the deacons were in a state of great anger with the blunt teacher, and one exclaimed—'Mr. Breeze, you have strangely forgotten yourself to-night, sir. We did not expect that you would have behaved in this way. We have always been very glad to see you in our pulpit, but your sermon to-night, sir, has been most insolent, shameful.' He wound up a pretty smart condemnation by saying—'In short, I don't understand you!'

"'Ho! ho! what? You say you don't understand me, eh! Look you then, I will tell you—I do understand you. Up in our mountains we have one man there—we do call him exciseman. He comes along to our shops and stores and says, 'What have you here? Anything contraband here?' And if it is all right the good man says, 'Step in, Mr. Exciseman; come in, look you.' He is all fair and open, and above board. But if he has anything secreted there, he does draw back surprised, and he makes a fine face and says,

'Sir, I don't understand you.' Now you tell me you don't understand me; but I do understand you, gentlemen; I do, and I do fear you have something contraband here. And now I will say good-night to you; but I must tell you one little word, that is, 'He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be tamned,'—and I begs no pardons.' "

CHAPTER XI.

Sydney Smith (1771-1845).

SYDNEY SMITH was born at Woodford, in Essex, in 1771. His parents were both persons out of the ordinary way, his father being remarkable for cleverness and eccentricity, and his mother for beauty and mental accomplishments. He owed much to both of them, but especially to his mother (who was the daughter of a French refugee), to whose Celtic blood Sydney used to attribute his constitutional gaiety. It is said of him that he fairly represented both the English and French nations, combining the depth, strength, and earnestness of the one with the vivacity and lightheartedness of the other.

He received his education at Winchester School, and New College, Oxford. His own inclination would have led him to the bar, but in deference to the wishes of his father he entered the church, and became curate of Amesbury, in Wiltshire. Here he became very intimate with Mr. Beach, the squire of the parish, who held him in such high estimation that he requested Mr. Smith to

give up his curacy and accompany his eldest son to the University of Weimar as his tutor. To this proposal Sydney assented, but before he could get there war broke out on the continent, and, "in stress of politics," he and his pupil put into Edinburgh, where he resided five years, during which time he officiated in the Episcopal Chapel, and published six sermons preached at that place. While in the metropolis of the north he formed the acquaintance of many eminent men, and in conjunction with Jeffrey and Brougham, started the *Edinburgh Review*, a periodical which produced an immense sensation as soon as it appeared, and "by the talent, originality, and honesty with which it was conducted, created a new era in British literature."

It was during his residence in Edinburgh that the following incident occurred. There was living in the city at the time a troublesome "bore," who on every possible occasion introduced the subject of the North Pole. No one escaped him, though all avoided him as they would the plague. One day he met Jeffrey in a narrow lane, and began instantly on his favourite topic, the North Pole. Losing patience, Jeffrey rushed past him, exclaiming, "Confound the North Pole." Sydney met him shortly afterwards boiling with indignation at Jeffrey's treatment. "Oh, my dear fellow," said Sydney, "never mind; no one minds what Jeffrey says; you know he respects nothing—absolutely nothing. Why, you will scarcely believe it, but it is not more than a week ago that I heard him speak disrespectfully of the Equator."

In 1803 Mr. Smith removed to London, where he accepted a lectureship at the Foundling Hospital. The income was only £50 a year, but he performed his duties well and faithfully. He was soon appointed morning preacher at Berkeley Chapel, where his services were so appreciated that in a few weeks the almost deserted place was crowded to the doors, and every sitting was let. Crowds flocked to hear his concise and racy sermons, "and felt that they were listening to a man of sense, earnestness, and intelligence, who had something to say, and who felt what he said."

Not only was he popular as a preacher, but his fame was considerably increased by a course of lectures on moral philosophy which he delivered at the Royal Institution. His wonderful wit and humour enabled him to treat this dry subject in such a way that numbers moving in the most refined circles in the metropolis attended to hear them. Francis Horner, in his letters, speaking of the lectures, says: "His success was great beyond all possible conjecture—from six to eight hundred hearers—not a seat to be procured even if you go an hour before the time. Nobody else, to be sure, could have executed such an undertaking with the least chance of success. For who could make such a mixture of odd paradox, quaint fun, manly sense, liberal opinions and striking language?" The success of the lectures surprised the author, who esteemed them so lightly that he intended to destroy the manuscripts, and it was not until after his death that they were published. His account of them is written in so racy a style, and

affords such an amusing specimen of his wit and humour, that we cannot compel ourselves to omit it.

"I knew nothing," says he, "of moral philosophy, but was thoroughly aware that I wanted £200 to furnish my house. The success, however, was prodigious; all Albemarle-street blocked up with carriages, and such an uproar that I never remember to have been excited by any other literary imposture. Every week I had a new theory about conception and perception, and supported it by a natural manner, a torrent of words, and an impudence scarcely credible in this prudent age. Still, in justice to myself, I must say there were some good things in them."

With the proceeds derived from the delivery of the lectures, he was enabled to furnish a new house in Orchard-street, "where he lived in simple and homely fashion, but yet with everything comfortable about him. As he could not afford luxuries, he dispensed with them, and showed himself in every respect above the folly of false appearances. Nothing, we are told, could be plainer than his table, yet persons of rank and affluence often came to visit him, and found the poverty of his fare sufficiently seasoned by the fascinations of his society."

In 1806 he was presented by the Lord Chancellor to the living of Foston-le-Clay in Yorkshire. Here he found his position was no sinecure. His income was derived from land which consisted of three hundred acres of the stiffest clay. There had not been a resident clergyman in the village for a hundred and fifty years,

owing to the wretched state of the hovel which had once been the parsonage-house. In 1808 the passing of the "Residence Bill" rendered it imperative on him to reside there, and not only so, but he was required to build a parsonage-house out of his own resources, or resign his living. He faced his difficulties, however, with such good humour, that the old clerk, the most important man in the village, exclaimed, "Muster Smith, it often stroikes moy moind that people as comes frae London is such fools. . . But you," he said, (giving him a nudge with his stick), "you I see are no fool."

He tells how he had to economise, turn farmer, as he could not let his land, buy deals, and become village parson, doctor, comforter, magistrate, and at the same time continue his vocation of Edinburgh reviewer.

Sydney had a horse he called "Calamity," which he reared himself—a huge, lank, large-boned chestnut, with four white legs, possessed of an unbounded appetite, devouring grass, hay, oats, beans, and every variety of food, moist and dry, and yet remaining as lean as though he had lived on sign-post hay—that is, by gnawing at the posts and palings of a public-house, as horses sometimes do when the rider is inside drinking. Mr. Smith found it exceedingly difficult to keep on him, and thus playfully writes in a letter: "I used to think a fall from a horse dangerous, but much experience has convinced me to the contrary. I have had six falls in two years, and just behaved like the Three per Cents. when they fall—I got up again, and am not a bit the

worse for it, any more than the stocks in question." Again he says, "I left off riding for the good of my parish and the peace of my family; for somehow or other my horse and I had a habit of parting company. On one occasion I found myself suddenly prostrate in the streets of York, much to the delight of the Dissenters. Another time my horse flung me over his head into a neighbouring parish, as if I had been a shuttlecock, and I felt grateful it was not into a neighbouring planet."

Perhaps it was this incident which led him to the purchase of a carriage, which he thus describes:— "At last it was suggested that a carriage was much wanted in the establishment. After diligent search I discovered in the back settlement of a York coach-maker an ancient green chariot, supposed to have been the earliest invention of its kind. I brought it home in triumph to my admiring family. Being somewhat dilapidated, the village tailor lined it, the village blacksmith repaired it; nay, but for Mrs. Sydney's earnest entreaties, we believe the village painter would have exercised his genius upon the exterior; it escaped this danger, however, and the result was wonderful. Each year added to its charms: it grew younger and younger—a new wheel, a new spring. I christened it 'the Immortal;' it was known all over the neighbourhood; the village boys cheered it, and the village dogs barked at it; but '*Faber meæ fortunæ*' was my motto, and we had no false shame."

Sydney had too much common sense to give way to

false shame, and he took great pleasure in rebuking it. One morning, for instance, a pompous little man called upon him, saying that being about to compile a history of distinguished families in Somersetshire, he had called to obtain the Smith arms. "I regret, sir," said the reverend wit, "not to be able to contribute to so valuable a work; but the Smiths never had any arms, and have invariably sealed their letters with their thumbs."

He hated pretension in any form, and never professed a knowledge he did not possess. Once the conversation turned upon pictures. "I like pictures, without knowing anything about them; but I hate coxcombry in the fine arts as well as in anything else. I got into dreadful disgrace with Sir G. B. once, who, standing before a picture at Bowood, exclaimed, turning to me, 'Immense breadth of light and shade!' I innocently said, 'Yes, about an inch and a half.' He gave me a look that ought to have killed me." Again he says, "I hate bare walls, so I cover mine with pictures. I took the advice once of two Royal Academicians; but brought their consultation to an abrupt termination by saying, 'Gentlemen, I forgot to mention that my highest price is five-and-thirty shillings.' The public, it must be owned, treat my collection with great contempt; and even Hibbert, who has been brought up in the midst of fine pictures, and might know better, never will admire them. But look at that sea-piece, now; what would you desire more? It is true the moon in the corner was rather dingy when I first bought it; so

I had a new moon put in for half-a-crown, and now I consider it perfect."

Sydney remained in his Yorkshire parish until 1828, when Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst, though differing from him in politics, presented him to a prebendal stall in Bristol, and enabled him to exchange Foston for the far more desirable rectory of Combe Florey, in Somersetshire. Here he remained until in 1831 he was promoted to the more valuable deanery of Saint Paul's. This was his last preferment and removal, until removed by the great leveller Death.

It is impossible to present more than a few specimens of his wit from the abundant store furnished in his writings and memoir.

He defined marriage as resembling a pair of shears, so joined that they cannot be separated; often moving in opposite directions, yet always punishing anyone who comes between them.

On one occasion he stated that after long study of early Greek philosophy, he was obliged to leave off with the conviction that in those days common sense had not been invented.

He used to say that there were three sexes in this country—men, women, and clergymen.

"Daniel Webster struck me as a steam-engine in trousers."

In preaching a charity sermon, Sydney frequently repeated the assertion that, of all nations, Englishmen were most distinguished for generosity and the love of their "species." The collection happened to be inferior

to the preacher's expectations, when he said that he had evidently made a great mistake, for that his expression should have been, that they were distinguished for the love of their "specie."

"I can't bear," said he, "to be imprisoned in the true orthodox way in my pulpit, with my head just peeping above the desk. I like to look down upon my congregation—to fire into them. The common people say I am a 'bould preacher,' for I like to have my arms free, and to thump the pulpit. A singular *contretemps* happened to me once, when, to effect this, I had ordered the clerk to pile up some hassocks for me to stand on. My text was, 'We are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.' I had scarcely uttered these words, and was preparing to illustrate them, when I did so practically, and in a way I had not anticipated. My fabric of hassocks suddenly gave way; down I fell, and with difficulty prevented myself from being precipitated into the arms of my congregation, who, I must say, behaved very well, and recovered their gravity sooner than I could have expected."

In 1831, he attended a meeting at Taunton on the occasion of the Lords' rejection of the Reform Bill, and, being called upon to speak, he amazed many of his hearers, who had never before heard such sentiments as he uttered from a clergyman. It is in this speech that the following now celebrated passage occurs:—"The attempt of the Lords to stop the progress of reform reminds me very forcibly of the great storm off Sid-

mouth, and of the conduct of the excellent Mrs. Partington on that occasion. In the winter of 1824, there set in a great flood upon that town: the tide rose to an incredible height, the waves rushed in upon the houses and everything was threatened with destruction. In the midst of this sublime and terrible storm, Dame Partington, who lived upon the beach, was seen at the door of her house, with mop and pattens, trundling her mop, squeezing out the sea-water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic was roused; Mrs. Partington's spirit was up; but I need not tell you that the contest was unequal. The Atlantic beat Mrs. Partington. She was excellent at a slop or a puddle, but she should not have meddled with a tempest." This speech produced an extraordinary impression, and pictures of Mrs. Partington with her mop speedily appeared in nearly every bookseller's window in London.

There was no question affecting, as he believed, the interests of the people, that did not receive his support. He aided every movement of this character by tongue and pen, and his sparkling wit and strong common-sense contributed largely to expose the folly of many time-honoured and corrupt practices. Take for instance the following. Replying to the argument that because England had prospered during the existence of the political and religious anomalies which he desired to see abolished, he said:—"There happens, gentlemen, to live near my parsonage, a labouring man of very superior character and understanding to his fellow

labourers, and who has made such good use of that superiority that he has saved what is (for his station in life) a very considerable sum of money; and if his existence be extended to the common period, he will die rich. It happens, however, that he is (and long has been) troubled with violent stomach pains, for which he hitherto has obtained no relief, and which really are the bane and torment of his life. Now, if my excellent labourer were to send for a physician, and to consult him respecting the malady, would it not be very singular language if our doctor were to say to him, 'My good friend, you surely will not be so rash as to attempt to get rid of those pains in your stomach. Have you not grown rich with those pains in your stomach? has not your situation, since you were first attacked, been improving every year? You surely will not be so foolish and so indiscreet as to part with the pains in your stomach!' Why what would be the answer of the rustic to this nonsensical admonition? 'Monster of Rhubarb!' he would say, 'I am not rich in consequence of the pains in my stomach, but in spite of them; and I would have been ten times richer, and fifty times happier, if I had never had any pains in my stomach at all.' Gentlemen, these rotten boroughs are your pains in the stomach—and you would have been a much richer and greater people if you had never had them at all. Your wealth and your power has been owing, not to the debased and corrupted parts of the House of Commons, but to the many independent and honourable members whom it has always contained

within its walls. If there had been a few more of these very valuable members for close boroughs, we should, I verily believe, have been by this time about as free as Denmark, Sweden, or the Germanized States of Italy."

Speaking on the same subject, he said:—When I was a young man, the place in England I remember as most notorious for highwaymen and their exploits was Finchley Common, near the metropolis; but Finchley Common, gentlemen, in the progress of improvement, came to be enclosed, and the highwaymen lose by those means the opportunity of exercising their gallant vocation. I remember a friend of mine proposed to draw up for them a petition to the House of Commons for compensation, which ran in this manner—'We, your loyal highwaymen of Finchley Common and its neighbourhood, having, at a great expense, laid in a stock of blunderbusses, pistols, and other instruments for plundering the public, and finding ourselves impeded in the exercise of our calling by the said inclosure of the said Common of Finchley, humbly petition your Honourable House will please to assign to us such compensation as your Honourable House in its wisdom and justice may think fit.' Gentlemen, I must leave the application to you."

When the question respecting counsel being allowed to prisoners was agitated, he wrote: "A most absurd argument was advanced in the honourable House, that the practice of employing counsel would be such an expense to the prisoner!—just as if anything was so expensive as being hanged! What a fine topic for the

ordinary! 'You are going,' says that exquisite divine, 'to be hanged to-morrow, it is true, but consider what a sum you have saved! Mr. Scarlett or Mr. Brougham might certainly have presented arguments to the jury which would have ensured your acquittal; but do you forget that gentlemen of their eminence must be recompensed by large fees, and that if your life had been saved, you would actually have been out of pocket £20? You will now die with the consciousness of having obeyed the dictates of a wise economy; and with a grateful reverence for the laws of your country, which prevents you from running into such unbounded expense—so let us now go to prayers.'"

Referring to the grandiloquent style of his friend Sir James Mackintosh, he says: "It struck me last night, as I was lying in bed, that Mackintosh, if he were to write on pepper, would thus describe it—'Pepper may philosophically be described as a dusty and highly pulverised seed of an oriental fruit; an article rather of condiment than diet, which dispersed lightly over the surface of food, with no other rule than the caprice of the consumer, communicates pleasure rather than affords nutrition, and, by adding a tropical flavour to the gross and succulent viands of the north, explains the objects of commerce, and justifies the industry of man.'"

Here is a capital hit at the folly of indiscriminate praise, which was Mackintosh's chief foible. It would be well for our platform speakers to take notice of it. "I amused myself the other day in writing the ter-

mination of a speech for him; would you like to hear hear it? I will read it to you: 'It is impossible to conclude these observations without expressing the obligations I am under to a person in a much more humble scene of life—I mean, sir, the hackney-coachman by whom I have been driven to this meeting. To pass safely through the streets of a crowded metropolis must require, on the part of the driver, no common assemblage of qualities. He must have caution without timidity, activity without precipitation, and courage without rashness; he must have clear perception of his object, and a dexterous use of his means. I can safely say of the individual in question that, for a moderate reward, he has displayed unwearied skill; and to him I shall never forget I owe unfractured integrity of limb, exemption from pain, and perhaps prolongation of existence. Nor can I pass over the encouraging cheerfulness with which I was received by the waiter, nor the useful blaze of light communicated by the link-boys as I descended from the carriage. It was with no common pleasure that I remarked in those men, not the mercenary bustle of venial service, but the genuine effusions of untutored benevolence: not the rapacity of subordinate agency, but the alacrity of humble friendship. What may not be said of a country where all the little accidents of life bring forth the hidden qualities of the heart—where her vehicles are driven, her streets illumined, and her bells answered by men teeming with all the refinements of civilised life? I cannot conclude, sir, without thanking you for the

very clear and distinct manner in which you have announced the proposition on which we are to vote. It is but common justice to add that public assemblies seldom witness articulation so perfect, language so select, and a manner so eminently remarkable for everything that is kind, impartial, and just.' "

A friend once sent him a note, requesting him to sit for his portrait to Landseer, the great animal painter. Sydney wrote back, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?"

"If I had a son who was a fool, I would make a parson of him," said an irate individual in company where Sydney was present. "Your father was not of your way of thinking," Sydney observed.

Sydney was complaining to his friends one day of a young gentleman who, although many years his junior, was in the habit of addressing him by his Christian name, a privilege which, as he remarked, he only allowed his most intimate friends. Shortly after, the young gentleman in question entered the room, and familiarly addressing Smith as "Sydney," enquired how he thought of passing the rest of the day. "For my part," he added, "the Archbishop of Canterbury [the then Dr. Howley] has invited me to pay him a visit at Addington Park, and I think I shall drive down and return in the cool of the evening." "Ah," said Smith, with a smile on his face that his friends well understood, "then let me give you a word of advice. I know something of the Archbishop—he is an excellent man, but rather proud; don't call him 'William,' he may not

like it." A roar of laughter followed this significant speech, and as the discomfited youth left the room, Sydney Smith turned round and quietly remarked, "I think I have settled the 'cool of the evening' at last."

Sydney mentions having once received a hit himself. He had called upon Erskine—who when Lord Chancellor had presented him to the living of Foston—to thank him for the appointment. "Oh," said Erskine, "don't thank me, Mr. Smith; I gave you the living because Lady Holland insisted on my doing so; and if she had desired me to give it to the devil he must have had it."

"It is always considered a piece of impertinence in England," said he, "if any man of less than two or three thousand a year has any opinion at all on important subjects."

Reviewing a book, he wrote, "We suppose the booksellers have authors at different prices. Those who write grammatically, and those who do not; and that they have not thought fit to put any of their best hands upon this work."

Speaking of American simplicity, he said: "The Americans, we believe, are the first persons who have discarded the tailor in the administration of justice, and his excellency the barber—two persons of endless importance in the codes and pandects of Europe. A judge administers justice, without a calorific wig and parti-coloured gown, in a coat and pantaloons. He is obeyed, however; and life and property are not badly protected in the United States."

But enough of specimens. We had intended giving

one or two examples of his generosity and good nature: it only remains for us to quote one or two testimonies to the character and influence of his writings.

"Looking," says Lord Monteagle, "at all he did, and the way in which he did it, it must be an inexpressible pleasure to all who knew, valued, and loved him, to observe that there was scarcely one question in which the moral, the intellectual, social, or even physical well-being of his fellow men were concerned, to the advancement of which he has not endeavoured to contribute."

"What Channing," says the *Literary Gazette*, "is to the democracy of America, with his sober, sustained, and clear dialectic, Sydney Smith is to the tribes of Noodledom, with his irony, his jeering, and his felicitous illustrations. It is his pre-eminently to abash those who are case-hardened against grave arguments, and to wring the withers of the very numerous and respectable class who,

> **'Safe from the bar, the pulpit, and the throne,**
> **Are touched and shamed by ridicule alone.'**

There are thousands whose intelligence is not to be awakened to the perception of wrong by the force of an elenchus, unless, like a wasp, it carries a sting in its tail; who perceive nothing false that is not at the same time obviously absurd. To all such Sydney Smith is an apostle; be they as bigoted and obtuse as they may, he breaks through their barrier of inapprehensiveness, presents them with a well-defined idea, and leaves them 'without a word to throw to a dog.'"

Miss Berry, in a note in her journal, says: "His

eminence as a writer upon various subjects was great. His kindness and charity were a blessing to the poor by whom he was surrounded ; his warmth of heart, the clearness and depth of his understanding, and his brilliant conversation, made him the most genial of social companions, and the most cherished guest of every society he entered. His abounding wit and playful humour were always founded on good sense and practical wisdom, and he was often apparently so amused himself with the comic combinations that sprang from their sober foundations, that, as the bright thoughts came bubbling forth in words, he enhanced the amusement of others by his own frank mirth."

Let not the reader think, however, that Sydney was a mere jester. But a part of Sydney's nature was known to the public : to the most noble elements of his character most people were strangers until the publication of his memoirs by his daughter, Lady Holland. Ever since it was issued Sydney's reputation has been rising, and the true proportions of his large intellect and larger heart have been growing upon the apprehension of his fellow-countrymen. Blinded with tears of laughter they could not estimate his magnitude.

His memoir shows how his wit was only the efflorescence of his greatness—the waving wild flowers on the surface of a pyramid. Moore writing of him says:

" Rare Sydney ! thrice honoured the stall where he sits,
And be his every honour he deigned to climb at !
Had England a hierarchy form'd of all wits,
Whom but Sydney would England proclaim as its primate."

CHAPTER XII.

BARHAM, WHATELY, AND WILBERFORCE.

WE present the reader, in this chapter, with a few specimens of humour taken from the lives of three men, in many respects as dissimilar from each other as it was well nigh possible for them to be, belonging as they did to the same church and engaged as they were in its ministry; but similar in one respect, viz., that all were natural humorists, and contributed in no small degree, by the use of it, to the happiness of their fellows. For humour unquestionably contributes not a little to our intellectual enjoyments, in affording recreation to the mind, and when employed with discretion produces most beneficial effects. It should, however, be employed for relaxation only, for, as Shakespeare says:

> "If all the year were playing holidays.
> Then sport would be as tedious as to work;
> But when they seldom come, they wished for come."

The gift of humour was thus employed by the

Rev. R. H. Barham (1778-1845).

He was born at Canterbury. His father, a country

gentleman, dying while he was yet young, and his mother being in feeble health, he was left under a three-fold guardianship. After some preparation at the hands of two maiden ladies named Dix, he was sent at the age of nine years to St. Paul's School, where he made rapid progress in the classics.

When about fourteen years of age he happened a serious accident by the overturning of the Dover Mail, in which he was a passenger. Bewildered by the terrific pace of the horses, he thrust his hand from the window for the purpose of opening the door, at the moment the vehicle turned upon its side. His hand was pressed to the ground, and he himself dragged for some distance along a recently repaired road. So terribly was he injured that for months his life was despaired of.

On leaving St. Paul's School, Mr. Barham entered as a gentleman commoner at Brasenose College, Oxford, where he formed an acquaintance with Hook and several others, who remained on terms of friendship with him for the rest of their lives. It was while at Oxford that the oft-told reply to the Principal of Brasenose was given. Mr. B. had acquired the habit of continuing his reading till break of day, and was frequently absent from morning chapel. This led his tutor to remonstrate with him, and demand an explanation.

"The fact is, sir," urged the pupil, "you are too late for me."

"Too late!" repeated the tutor in amazement.

"Yes, sir—too late. I cannot sit up till seven

o'clock in the morning. I am a man of regular habits; and unless I go to bed at four or five at latest I am really fit for nothing next day."

The reply, however, was followed immediately by "an apology, sincerely offered and silently accepted."

Mr. Barham's intention when he entered college was to study for the law, but while there he suffered a short but severe illness, which, with the death under most distressing circumstances of a young man with whom he was more than slightly acquainted, turned the whole current of his thoughts, and led to his determining to devote himself to the ministry of the gospel. He accordingly took his degree of B.A., and in March, 1813, was appointed curate of Ashford, in Kent, and in the following year proceeded to Westall, a small parish some few miles distant, and during the same year married a daughter of Captain Smart, of the Royal Engineers. In 1817, he was collated by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the rectory of Snargate, at the same time removing to Warehome, of which parish he became the curate. There he remained, pursuing the even tenor of his way, until the close of the summer of 1821, when he took up his abode permanently in London, having been elected to a minor canonry in St. Paul's Cathedral.

When Bentley started his *Miscellany* in 1837, he sought and secured the services of Mr. Barham as a regular contributor to its pages. Up to this time he had been an anonymous and comparatively unknown writer. The publication, however, of first one and then another of his humorous and clever "Ingoldsby

Legends," excited the curiosity as well as the admiration of the public, and he soon became pretty generally known as their author. The ground-work of several of these stories was furnished to him by Mrs. Hughes, who possessed an almost inexhaustible store of old and quaint stories. Respecting the "Legends" themselves, his son and biographer observes that remarkable as they have been pronounced for the wit and humour they display, their distinguishing attraction lies in the almost unparalleled flow and facility of the versification. Popular phrases, sentences the most prosaic, even the cramped technicalities of legal diction and snatches from various languages, are wrought in with an apparent absence of all art and effort, that surprises, pleases, and convulses the reader at every turn. A harmony pervades the whole, a modulation of numbers never perhaps surpassed and rarely equalled in compositions of this class.

There is a perpetual mirthfulness pervading these stories. Almost every line contains some humorous allusion or stroke of wit, while every now and then there are passages of great power, standing out in strong contrast from the ludicrous imagery which surrounds them, that show that Mr. Barham was capable of producing works of a very different and superior character. We regret that he did not make the attempt.

Mr. Barham's biography shows most clearly that the author's aim in writing these "Legends" was to expose the errors of Popery and Puseyism. His smartest hits are made against penance, pardons,

purgatory, masses, and the worshipping of saints and images. In his last illness, the only matter on which he exhibited any anxiety was the possibility of some misconception existing or arising as to his motives in the composition of those of the "Ingoldsby Legends" which bear in any degree upon matters of religion. His purpose, he distinctly repeated, was to combat error and imposture in an age given over much perhaps to scientific criticism. Whether his treatment of these subjects was judicious or injudicious, successful or unsuccessful, the attempt, at all events, was made in good faith, and as such stood approved to his conscience. He was a perfect master of parody, and his writings afford many specimens of its use: two of these we quote. The first contains a rebuke of the custom of immoderate drinking, and is a parody of Wolfe's "Burial of Sir John Moore":

"Not a sous had he got, not a guinea or note,
And he look'd confoundedly flurried,
As he bolted away without paying his shot,
And the landlady after him hurried.

"We saw him again at dead of night,
When home from the club returning;
We twigg'd the Doctor beneath the light
Of the gas lamp dimly burning.

"All bare and exposed to the midnight dews,
Reclined in the gutter we found him;
And he lay like a gentleman taking his snooze,
With his martial cloak around him.

"'The Doctor's as drunk as a piper,' we said,
And we managed a shutter to borrow;
We raised him, and sigh'd at the thought that his head
Would consumedly ache on the morrow.

"We bore him home and put him to bed,
And we told his wife and daughter
To give him next morning a couple of red
Herrings and soda-water.

"Loudly they talk'd of his money that's gone,
And his lady began to upbraid him;
But little he reck'd if they let him snore on
'Neath the counterpane just as we laid him.

"We tuck'd him in, and had hardly done,
When, beneath the window calling,
We heard the rough voice of the son of a gun
Of a watchman 'one o'clock' bawling.

"Slowly and sadly we all walk'd down
From his room in the uppermost story.
A rushlight we placed on the cold hearth-stone,
And left him alone in his glory."

The next is the well-known parody on Southey's "Curse of Kehama," from "The Cardinal's Curse" in the "Ingoldsby Legends," pronounced on the jackdaw that had hopped off with his ring:

"The Cardinal rose with a dignified look,
He call'd for his candle, his bell, and his book;
In holy anger and pious grief
He solemnly cursed that rascally thief.
He cursed him at board, he cursed him in bed,
From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head;
He cursed him in sleeping, that every night
He should dream of the devil and wake in a fright;
He cursed him in eating, he cursed him in drinking,
He cursed him in coughing, in sneezing, in winking;
He cursed him in sitting, in standing, in lying;
He cursed him walking, in riding, in flying;
He cursed him in living; he cursed him dying.
Never was heard such a terrible curse;
But what gave rise
To no little surprise
Nobody seemed one penny the worse."

He abounded with amusing anecdotes, which he would tell in a very humorous manner. The following are but a few specimens taken from his "Life and Letters."

After the death of George III. the church of St. Faith was hung with black cloth. The rector, Dr. Fly, not having made any arrangement with the parish previous to the mourning being put up as to its final appropriation, the churchwardens, after it had hung the usual period, took it down, and directed that two-thirds of it should be the property of the rector, and that one-third should be the perquisite of the curate. The Doctor disputed their right to make any such arrangement, claiming and eventually appropriating the whole to his own use. Mr. Hayes, the curate, meeting him shortly after with a friend, inquired after his health, and how things were going on in the country, from which the doctor had just returned. "Why, sir," says he, "pretty well, considering the season, but the weather has been so mild and so wet that the vermin have played the deuce in my garden. "Not unlikely," returned Hayes; "indeed I have understood that the fly has lately been very active among the cabbage."

Once, during a considerable press, Phil Stone, the property-man at Drury-lane, said to a person, "Will you be kind enough to stand a little *backer*." "I can't," was the ready reply, "but a pinch of snuff is at your service if you will accept of it."

Gerald Frost got up a Medico-Botanic Society, and was exceedingly anxious to obtain the patronage of

royalty and the aristocracy. Among others the Duke of St. Albans subscribed, and became a member as well. Meeting with Frost some time afterwards, he said, "Well, Mr. Thingumee, how is that medical thing getting on?" "Exceedingly prosperous indeed, my Lord Duke; we are increasing in numbers and respectability every day. We've got twelve sovereigns down since the commencement of the present year." "O," said his Lordship, "if you've only got twelve sovereigns in all that time I don't think you are getting on very fast; why I gave you five guineas myself!"

The Bishop of London attended a great meeting at which the Duke of Cambridge was present. When the Bishop said "Let us pray," His Royal Highness rose up and exclaimed with great fervour, "Certainly, by all means!"

He used to relate with great gusto a story of a traveller and his dog. Coming to a halt one night, and being short of food, the traveller proposed for their mutual benefit an arrangement which he carried out, viz., after cutting off the dog's tail and boiling it, he ate the flesh and gave the poor doggie the bone. An illustration of the "Reciprocity" which some among ourselves would like to see adopted.

Barham was, like most humorists, a man of great warmth of heart, and possessed an amiability of disposition which rendered him justly dear to numbers beyond the pale of his immediate connections and associates. He was exceedingly liberal to the poor, and ever ready to assist the needy in every possible way. During the

last four months of his life he suffered exceedingly from bodily weakness and pain, but his cheerfulness and trust in God never forsook him. He expired on the morning of June 17th, 1845, in the 57th year of his age, without a struggle, in faith, hope, and in charity with all men.

Much greater as an acute reasoner and a deep thinker was a contemporary humorist,

Archbishop Whately (1787-1863).

He was the youngest son of Dr. Joseph Whately, Prebendary of Bristol. He was born in London, 1787, and died in 1863. His early education was received at a private school near Bristol. In 1805 he entered Oxford, and obtained his fellowship in 1811, which he held until 1821. In that year he married, and was shortly afterwards presented to the living of Halesworth, in Suffolk. In 1822, he was appointed Bampton Lecturer, and in 1826 Principal of St. Alban's Hall; and without interest or influence other than that of his great and rising reputation, was in 1831 transferred to the see of Dublin.

Gifted with an intellect of extraordinary subtlety and capacity for pure reasoning, he was at the same time eminently practical. It was this cast of his mind, vivified, as it ever was, by intense love of truth, embodied in language which united singular grace with singular vigour of expression, and teeming with a fertility of illustration scarcely more marvellous for its richness than surprising for its singular aptitude, which gave

such value to his writings, and such a charm to his intercourse.

Few who read his writings have any idea of the vast fund of fun and amusement which he possessed, and which he retained for the private amusement of his friends, though it occasionally broke out on public occasions, and especially at meetings with his clergy. During the dull intervals of a visitation, when ecclesiastical business languished, he would amuse the whole company by his oddities of thought, and witty sayings and questions. Indeed, so common were these, that the even and sometimes drowsy current of Dublin society was almost always enlivened by some little witty boomerang of his, fluttering from mouth to mouth and from club to club. The Archbishop's last was eagerly looked for. Some were indifferent, some were trifling; but it was conceded that all had an odd extravagance, which marked them as original, quaint, queer. In this respect he was the Sydney Smith of the Irish capital.

The following specimens of these sallies were communicated to *Notes and Queries* by "Young Yorick."

"What is the difference," he asked of a young clergyman he was examining, "between a form and a ceremony? The meaning seems nearly the same; yet there is a very nice distinction." Various answers were given. "Well," he said, "it lies in this: you sit upon a form, but you stand upon ceremony."

"Morrow's Library" is the Mudie of Dublin; and the Rev. Mr. Day a popular preacher. "How in-

consistent," said the archbishop, "is the piety of certain ladies here. They go to-day for a sermon and to-morrow for a novel!" At a dinner party he called out suddenly to the host, "Mr——!" There was silence. "Mr.——, what is the proper female companion of this John Dory?" After the usual number of guesses, an answer came, "Anne Chovy."

Doctor Gregg (the new bishop) and he at dinner. Archbishop: Come, though you are John Cork, you mustn't stop the bottle here." The answer was not inapt: "I see your lordship is determined to draw me out."

On Doctor Knox's appointment to the bishopric of Down, an appointment in some quarters unpopular:— "The Irish Government will not be able to stand many more such knocks down as this!"

At a lord lieutenant's banquet a grace was given of unusual length. "My lord," said the archbishop, "did you ever hear the story of Lord Mulgrave's chaplain?" "No," said the lord lieutenant. "A young chaplain had preached a sermon of great length. 'Sir,' said Lord Mulgrave, bowing to him, 'there were some things in your sermon to-day I never heard before.' 'O, my lord,' said the flattered chaplain, 'it is a common text, and I could not have hoped to have said anything new on the subject.' 'I heard the clock strike twice,' said Lord Mulgrave."

At some religious ceremony at which he was to officiate in the country, a young curate who attended him grew very nervous as to their being late. "My

good young friend," said the archbishop, "I can only say to you what the criminal going to be hanged said to those around, who were hurrying him, 'Let us take our time; they can't begin without us.'"

We have read with great interest his "Life and Letters," by his talented daughter, published by Longman, Green, & Co. The volumes contain numerous illustrations of his great abilities and overflowing good nature and kindliness. The following specimens of his humour are principally taken from that work.

It was during his residence at Oxford he became famous as a man of wit and humour. Speaking one day to a friend he said: "It is no wonder that some English people have a taste for persecution, since it is the first lesson that most are taught in their nurseries." His friend denied that he, at least, had so been taught. "Are you sure?" replied Whately. "What think you to this?

> 'Old Daddy Longlegs won't say his prayers,
> Take him by the left leg, and throw him downstairs.'"

In one of his works he says, "Those who garble and misrepresent a man's expressions in order to bring on him abhorrence and persecution from credulous bigots, may be regarded as the genuine successors of those tyrannical emperors who used to dress up in the skins of wild beasts their wretched victims, the ancient Christians, and then set dogs at them to worry them to death."

Whately was one of the manliest of men. He had an intense dislike to anything feminine in young men,

and, no doubt, like Henry Ward Beecher, hated to see boys growing up girls. In one of his letters he speaks out strongly against those who talk about the studies which were necessary to their success in life as "dry studies." "If this," said he, "is to be the general tone of 'Young England;' if they think to live in Lubberland, where pigs run about ready roasted, and the streets are paved with plum-pudding, we shall have some 'Young Englanders' of the humbler classes telling us that driving a plough is dry work, and that they would rather employ themselves in bird-nesting."

He had, at one time, an Irish gardener, who, though clever and skilful, was exceedingly conceited. One day he was relating some of his boasted achievements in gardening, when his master asked, ironically, whether he had ever raised plants by "capillary attraction;" to which the gardener, totally unconscious of the joke, replied unhesitatingly, "Oh, surely, my Lord."

He always enjoyed a joke. Once, when a young man, he was out in a boat fishing with a friend. A man came up and asked to be taken in; and, on being allowed to do so, fished from the other end of the boat. He caught nothing. "We did," says the friend, "as fast as we threw in the line. We were, as usual, speaking in Latin. The man expressed his surprise that he could not catch as we did. 'Why,' said Whately, 'you should talk Latin to them as we do.' The fact was that there was a shoal, which did not reach to his end of the boat."

"Cultivate," he used to say, "not only the corn-fields of the mind, but the pleasure-grounds also."

Once, when dining with the King of the Belgians, he startled that monarch by saying that he considered his Majesty set a bad example to the states of Europe; but immediately added, "for you afford the best specimen possible of the value of an elective monarchy."

Speaking in the House of Lords on the subject of a revival of Convocation, in reply to the assumption that the party calling for it was the most numerous, he told, in his own peculiar manner, the following story:—He was informed once that a violent opposition existed in a particular parish to a proposed alteration of a road, at which he was very much surprised, because the alteration was conducive to public convenience. In order to ascertain the real opinion of the inhabitants of the district, he sent to each house a black bean and a white bean, with directions that those who were opposed to the alterations should return a black bean, and *vice versâ*. The return was twenty-nine black and three hundred white beans. Yet the twenty-nine black beans called themselves "the parish," and it was hardly necessary to say that they made twice as much noise as the three hundred white beans.

Urging a friend to write a little tract in answer to the Mormonite tracts which were being distributed in large numbers, and unsettling the minds of many of the lower classes, he said: "I can get you the materials—viz., the true history of the rise of the sect; for it has been well described, and the matter well investigated

for the upper classes, but not so as to reach the lower. The poison is retailed in the streets in hap'orths, and the antidote is to be had only in large casks."

A young girl of his acquaintance had got into the habit of scribbling an almost undecipherable hand. Writing to her he commenced in a very clear hand, "My dear ——," and then followed a page which it was impossible to read; followed by the words distinctly written, "Now you see the evil of writing unintelligibly."

He compared one writer to the hen in the fable, who persisted in sitting on snakes' eggs, and was greatly surprised to find young snakes come out.

"I have no hope of making converts of those who have grown up in bigotry; their carcases must fall in the wilderness; but the rising generation may be kept untainted, and brought into a good land. It is vain to pour water in the centre of a conflagration; but by keeping the adjoining roofs wet the fire may be prevented from spreading."

One day, while in his garden, a friend referred among other matters to the great revolution in the medical treatment of lunatics introduced by Pinel, who, instead of the strait waistcoat and other maddening goads, awarded to each patient healthful and agreeable occupation, including agriculture and gardening. "I think gardening would be a very dangerous indulgence for lunatics," observed Dr. Whately. "How so?" said his friend surprised. "Because they might grow madder," was the rejoinder.

One specimen of the humour to be found in his

correspondence must suffice. Writing to a lady who had requested his opinion on the present state of Ireland, he replied in a letter composed of a string of proverbs, which illustrates his remarkable love of, and extensive acquaintance with, these short and pithy sayings :

" May, 1837.

" The occasion is now arrived when all who wish to deliver this country from its troubles, and ward off its impending dangers, ought to exert themselves, and, as the proverb says, ' Take time by the forelock.' We may regret that so many opportunities have been already lost ; but, as the proverb says, ' The miller cannot grind with the water that is past.' If we would not be worse than fools, whom, as the proverb says, ' Experience teaches,' we should consider how to avoid losing another opportunity, which may be the last, and then we shall repent it, since, as the proverb says, '*Bien perdu, bien connu.*' Standing still and waiting never did any good, for, as the proverb says, ' Though the sun stood still, time never did.' ' To-morrow,' as the proverb says, ' comes never.' It is in vain to wish that things were in a different state from what they are : ' I never fared worse,' as the proverb says, ' than when I had a wish for my supper ; ' and it is no use to talk of what we should do if the case were different, for, as the proverb says, ' If my aunt had been a man, then she would have been my uncle,' and, ' If the sky should fall,' as says the proverb, ' then we should catch larks.' It is idle to look for a change of ministers, and hope

great things from a different party in power, for, as the proverb says, 'To a leaky ship all winds are contrary;' and it is more idle to waste our spirits in anger against another's fault, for, as the proverb says, 'There are two kinds of things a man should never get angry at—what he cannot help and what he can.' A wise man will never be driven desperate, and, as the proverb says, 'throw the horse away after the saddle;' but if we do exert ourselves to help the church and the nation, others who are now lost in apathy may follow the example, for, as the proverb says, 'Two dry sticks will kindle a green one.' This is much better than fretting ourselves with grief and indignation, since, as the proverb says, 'What is the use of patience if we cannot find it when we want it? He who gives way to anger punishes himself for the fault of another.' The state of things is now such as calls for a fundamental and permanent remedy that shall remove the cause of existing evils. To look merely for a palliation of each evil as it arrives is, as the proverb says, 'To work at the pump and leave the leak open.' If we leave things alone we shall find them indeed, as the proverb says, 'like sour ale in summer;' and to grudge any sacrifice, inconvenience, or trouble, for a greater and more lasting advantage, is to be, as the proverb says, 'Penny wise and pound foolish.' 'No pains, no gains,' as the proverb says; and again, as the proverb says, 'If you will not take pains, pains will take you.' 'We had better,' as the proverb says, 'wear out shoes than sheets.' We must not be merely satisfied pleading

rights which we cannot defend, when, as the proverb says, 'Might overcomes right.' 'No man can live on an income of which he gets,' as the proverb says, 'no pence in the pound.' Besides, we should remember that, as the proverb says, 'He buys honey too dear who licks it off thorns,' It is indeed not to be wondered at that those who have suffered much should easily be alarmed, and always, as the proverb says, 'misgive that they may not mistake.' But they should guard against imaginary dangers, as 'The scalded cat,' says the proverb, 'fears cold water,' and 'He that is bitten by a serpent,' as the proverb says, 'is afraid of the rope.' But, as the proverb says, 'To run away is to run a risk.' I do not mean that anything can be proposed which is not open to objection. 'A fool,' as the proverb says, 'can easily find faults which a wise man cannot easily mend;' but the question is to find out what course is open to the least objection, for we should remember, as the proverb says, 'Half a loaf is better than no bread;' and again, as the proverb says, 'A man with a wooden leg goes the better for it.' We must not seek for the best thing we could imagine, but for the best that is practicable, and, as the proverb says, 'Drive the nail that will go.' 'If we cannot alter the wind,' as the proverb says, 'we must turn the mill sails.' We have found by experience what can be expected from those who express great regard for us. Many of them are, as the proverb says, 'Good friends at a sneeze.' One can get nothing but 'God bless you!' and some of them have given us good reason to say, according to the

proverb, 'Save me from my friends; I care not for my enemies.' Some of them are, as the proverb says, 'As honest as any man in the cards when the kings are out.' It is time, therefore, that we look with less distrust towards those who do not make such high professions, for, as the proverb says, 'An ass that will carry me is better than a horse that will throw me;' and again, as the proverb says, 'Better an ass that speaks right than a prophet that speaks wrong.' And if we will not learn this in time, we shall find, as the proverb says, 'As we brew so must we bake.' But although this, to me, seems very much to the purpose, you will, perhaps, think it tedious and vapid; because, as the proverb says, 'Wise men make proverbs, and fools repeat them.' Remember, however, that, as the proverb says, 'Though fools learn nothing from wise men, wise men learn much from fools.'"

Whately was a man of unbounded generosity. He gave away, during the time he occupied the see of Dublin, above £40,000. No case of real distress was ever allowed by him to go unrelieved.

He was ever the friend of the oppressed—injustice of any kind aroused his indignation and secured his interest. He laboured unweariedly to redress the wrongs of the poor and needy. "He was," says a writer in the *Sunday Magazine*, "disinterested beyond most men; and determined to be beyond suspicion, as he was above temptation. He suffered his only son to continue for years a hardworking curate in England, and when he did, at last, remove him to his own diocese, it was only

to bestow upon him such moderate preferment as might reasonably have been expected by other men of much less undoubted qualifications. He was profoundly humble. During the long sickness which preceded his death, the weighty words which he uttered were full of the hope and faith which sustained him. A friend who knew how earnestly he had prayed and hoped that he might retain his faculties to the last, said to him, 'The Lord has heard your prayers, and preserved your intellect unimpaired.' He replied, 'It is not intellect which can avail me now, but faith in Christ Jesus.' He died as he had lived, trusting alone to that grace which he had sought as his guide through life and found, as his support in death, in the 76th year of his age."

We regret that the limits of this chapter will allow us to give but little more than one or two anecdotes illustrative of the humour of the witty, wise and eloquent

Bishop Wilberforce.

He was one day staying with Lord Palmerston. The Premier, when about to leave for church, wished the Bishop to accompany him, but the latter preferred to walk. On the way he was overtaken by a shower of rain. Presently the carriage came rolling by, and as it did so Palmerston put his head out of the carriage window and exclaimed:

"How blest is he who ne'er consents
By ill advice to walk."

Promptly came back the Bishop's reply, in the two following lines of the verse :

> "Nor stands in sinners' ways, nor sits
> Where men profanely talk."

On another occasion he was travelling by rail, when a lady passenger, who did not know him, asked him if he could tell her how it was that the Bishop of Oxford was called "Soapy Sam." "Because," replied he, "he is so often in hot water, but always comes out with clean hands."

One day when in a carriage at a railway station no great distance from Brighton, a gruff, impertinent man was stood close under the carriage window, and, seeing some luggage with the Bishop's address on, said, "Ah, Master Wilberforce is somewhere in this train : that's gentleman I have often thought I should like to tackle : I should like to put a question or two to him : yes, yes, I should like to hear what he'd say." The Bishop's head was out of the window in a minute. "Now is your time then," said he, "here he is. Where's your question? There are many questions I can't answer," said the Bishop, "but I never heard the question I could not learn something from." The person thus addressed was considerably perplexed and confused. At length he blundered out, "Well, I will ask you a question as you be here : now you're a bishop, and I should like to ask you a question I don't think you'd find it easy to answer." "Well, well, but what is it?" "Why this," said the man with a triumphant chuckle : "which is the nearest way to heaven."

"Ah," said the Bishop, "that is very simple: I should have thought you knew that; I learnt that when I was a very little boy; don't you know? Take the first turning to the right and keep straight on."

"As a conversationalist," says the Rev. F. Arnold, "he was unrivalled. He had all the newest anecdotes, and had read all the newest books. Occasionally he seems to have read new books in manuscript. How often a good anecdote would be embedded in his remarks; we will just cull a few. He was speaking of a man who objected to definite religious teaching. 'A friend was walking round this man's garden one day, and he saw one spot which was eminently qualified to serve as a strawberry-bed, but it was grown over with weeds nearly a yard high. His friend being of an economical turn of mind, said to him, 'Why do you let that beautiful ground, which would do so well for a strawberry-bed, lie waste?' Being a man of conscientious views, he replied, 'Because I do not think it right to prejudice the ground in favour of strawberries.' But not prejudicing the ground in favour of strawberries led to an immense crop of perfectly useless weeds, which took great pains to seed themselves, and grew again time after time. So in all attempts to teach children, if you do not prejudice their minds in favour of strawberries, weeds will come in very great abundance.' It is impossible to read his speeches without finding many a golden saying, many a brilliant illustration. But as one who knew him well writes:—'We do not care to quote *bon mots*. It was his whole

conversation that charmed. There was such an astonishing variety about it—theory, argument, disquisition, all poured out together, and all tranfigured by his exquisite diction and wonderfully flexible voice. Bishop Blomfield, Bishop Thirlwall, all the best Oxford men, lions brought down from London or elsewhere (once we met Rajah Brook), he drew out all—as a conversationalist he surpassed all. Blomfield was all but supreme as a story-teller. Samuel Wilberforce added a superior charm of grace which makes us put him first. Then those Cuddesdon College anniversaries, and the sunshine which he seemed to diffuse around him over the hundreds which he brought together. . . . His knowledge of individuals was something extraordinary. The individuals themselves were often astonished by it. A London curate went down into Berkshire to fulfil a few weeks' duty as a *locum tenens*, that kind of office which has made almost a new order in the Church of England. He happened to go to an evening gathering where he met the Bishop. The dignitary at once took him by the arm, and playfully said, 'Now, what do you want, coming here into my diocese?' The Bishop knew all about him. I remember," says Mr. Arnold, "once meeting the Bishop at a friend's house in Paris. An American friend was with me, the late Bishop Boone. Bishop Boone asked me to introduce him. The thought of introducing two bishops to each other was really too much for my feelings. I realised Boswell's feeling in introducing Johnson to Paoli, that he was an isthmus uniting two great continents. I went to our host, and

requested him to make the introduction. When Bishop Wilberforce advanced with his beaming eyes and benignant manner, that would give a friend the notion that he had been his waking and sleeping thought for months before, he greeted his episcopal brother as an old acquaintance. Bishop Boone declined the soft impeachment. Bishop Wilberforce appeared to insist that he knew him well. 'My lord,' said Boone, quickly, 'I live in China.' It was impossible, however, to disconcert the Bishop, who immediately rejoined, 'Ah, yes; I know you by correspondence!'"

Once, when in company with the Vicar of Leeds, the late Dr. Hook, he asked, "What two dignitaries of the Church remind you of two necessary articles of a lady's dress?" No one answering, he replied, "Hook and I."

The Bishop sometimes fell into the snare which besets all ministers who are more than usually given to humour, viz., to neglect giving due prominence to religious conversation. "This," says one who knew him well, "it must be confessed, was the case with the Bishop, amid the hospitalities of his palace at Cuddesdon, which were of a very sumptuous character. Like other great country houses, there was often a stream of visitors pouring through it, and the life became too much mere hotel life. The guests had sometimes reason to complain that they saw nothing of their distinguished host. They might listen to the stream of eloquence and anecdote, but they found it impossible to penetrate beneath the glittering, polished surface, into that quiet, earnest home-talk that they would desire to

have. Again and again have I met with persons who spoke of their intercourse with the Bishop as a great disappointment. I once heard the story of a young lady whose whole nature had been deeply impressed and moved by the Bishop's teaching, whether by speech or publication. It was the darling wish of her heart that she might meet the great master in Israel, and receive from him some measure of direction and consolation. To her great joy, a letter came one day from a friend, saying that the Bishop was about to stay at a certain house, and inviting her to make a visit at the same time. It was one of the Bishop's flying visits—one of the pleasantest sorts of visits—the dress day, rest day, and guest day. He was to preach on the Sunday and be gone on the Monday or Tuesday. He came, and, as usual, saw and conquered. All the little society clustered round the brilliant orb. A stream of anecdote, repartee, and illustration flowed forth from a very ocean of information. He spoke on all things, down to the 'hyssop on the wall,' and being a naturalist, he would be particularly fertile on the subject of the hyssop. But there was no religious reference in all that conversation, no opportunity of ministering to an anxious and burdened mind. Sunday came, and brought with it a sermon of unexampled fervour and eloquence. Still there was no pause in the restless, eager stream of conversation; every subject had its place except the one subject which overshadows all others. The anxious lady thought she would try one last chance. The Bishop was leaving very early the following morning, long

before the usual breakfast hour, and the young lady arranged with her hostess that she should come down and give him his coffee. She had then the great privilege of a *tête-à-tête* with the Bishop. The same meteoric conversation streamed and flashed before her. She strove to attain a deeper tone, but was unsuccessful. There seemed to be no opportunity of showing him her burden of anxiety and care. At last the Bishop's horse was brought round to the door. With an uncontrollable impulse she advanced to the horse's head, and said, 'My lord, are you always thus? Are you always so brilliant, and clever, and amusing? Is there any time when sorrowful people may speak to you about their soul's trouble?" The Bishop started back in sudden amazement. His colour went from him. But then leaning forward he was his best self again, and in words inexpressibly touching he gave her to understand how in his position the world was ever about him, but gave her also to understand that, though he might not have shown it, he was full of deep sympathy for such a case as hers. And then he rode away."

CHAPTER XIII.

Norman Macleod, 1812-1872.

FEW recent biographies have interested and impressed us more than the subject of this chapter. It portrays most graphically the life of a real human being—a man full of kindly sympathies, broad yet profound views, and reverent regard for all that is noble and true.

Norman Macleod was born June 3rd, 1812, at Campbeltown, a seaport in Scotland. His father, who at the time of Norman's birth had the pastoral charge of the parish, was a man full of geniality, wit, and poetry, whose "tact and common sense were as remarkable as his pathos and humour. He seldom if ever lectured his children on religious subjects, but spread around him a cheerful, kindly, and truly religious atmosphere." His influence upon Norman was very great, and in after life his son declared that he "never heard him speak of Calvinism, Arminianism, Presbyterianism, or Episcopacy, or exaggerate doctrinal difficulties. I had to study all these questions after I

left home. I thank God for his free, loving, sympathising, and honest heart. He might have made me a slave to any 'ism.' He left me free to love Christ and Christians."

In childhood Norman was what he continued to be through life, full of fun, quickly catching up "the spirit of all outward things in nature and character." His sense of the ludicrous was remarkably strong, and his powers of mimicry amazing. When only about six years old he was so unwell that leeches had to be applied, but instead of shrinking from the application, "he named them after the sheriff, provost, and other characters in the town," keeping up an unceasing dialogue with them, "scolding one or praising the other as each did its curative work well or ill, and all in the exact voice and manner of the various persons they were meant to represent," and convulsing with laughter those who had to attend him.

It is not our purpose to dwell upon the varied incidents of his life: for these we refer our readers to his biography. Our business is simply to furnish specimens of the humour with which these volumes abound. But let not our readers imagine that Norman Macleod was a mere "rattlepated joker," for nothing could be further from the truth. His journal, which he commenced when a mere youth, shows that though in company he was "buoyant and witty, overflowing with animal spirits, the very soul of laughter and enjoyment," he not only preserved a habit of careful spiritual self-culture, but that in his quieter hours he was the

subject of feelings profoundly solemn, and constantly mused on the unseen and heavenly realities of a future state of existence.

Principal Shairp, who was intimate with him while they were at Glasgow College together, says: "He was then overflowing with generous, ardent, contagious impulse. Brimful of imagination, sympathy, buoyancy, humour, drollery, and affectionateness, I never knew anyone who contained in himself so large and varied an armful of the humanities. Himself a child of Nature, he touched Nature and human life at every point. There was nothing human that was without interest for him; nothing great or noble to which his heart did not leap up." The same writer says he never met with such joyousness—"exuberance of joy, combined with purity of heart"—in any one else. "We had never before known anyone who took a serious view of life, and was really religious, who combined with it so much hearty hopefulness. He was happy in himself, and made all others happy with whom he had to do."

Some of the finest specimens of his humour are to be found in his letters to members of his own family, which were written with an *abandon* truly refreshing; but the same spirit of almost uncontrollable fun occasionally seized him when corresponding with intimate friends. This may be seen in the following extracts from a letter to Sir John Campbell, on the birth of a son and heir. After describing an imaginary scene in the fleet, in which the "glorious news" was signalled from the Commodore, and the guns fired amid

"three tremendous cheers," he goes on to say: "It is impossible to do justice to the sensation which was created in every part of the ship. The vessel herself made one of her best *bows*, and for once ceased to look *stern*. The sails, though suffering much from the *bight* of a rope, for which the doctor had stuck upon them a number of *leeches*, and recommended wet *sheets*, nevertheless 'looked swell' and much pleased as the *top gallants* said sweet things into their *lee earing*. The royals, though rather high, and complaining of the *truck* system, waved their *caps*. The chain-cable sung 'Old King *Coil*,' while the best-bower cried *encore* (anchor). The *capstan* began to make love to the *windlass*, who was thought to be a great *catch*, but who preferred the *caboose* on account of his *coppers*. The *boatswain* took the ship round the *waist*, but got it *pitched* into him for his impertinence. He said it was all *friendship*. The *binnacle* was out of his wits with joy—quite *non-compass*. The wheel never *spoke*; he had more *conning* than any in the ship, and was afraid of being *put down*, or getting *hard up*. The *cuddy* gave a fearful bray. The *cat-of-nine-tails* gave a mew which was heard a mile off, and scampered off to the *best-bower*, which was embracing the *cat-head*, and sharing its *stock* with it. The *life-buoy* roused up the *dead-lights*, who rushed and wakened the *dead-eyes*, who began to weep tears of joy. The *shrouds* turned into wedding garments. The two *davits* said they would, out of compliment to the laird, call themselves after the two *Johns*. The *companion* got so in love with marriage that he swore he would not be

cheated by a mere name, but get another companion as soon as possible. The long-boat sighed for a punt, and began to pay his addresses to the cutter. The launch got so jealous that he kicked the bucket; while the *swab* declared that he would turn cleanly and try and earn a good character, so as to get spliced to a *holy-stone*. The guns offered their services to all hands, and promised that they would marry all and sundry *can(n)onically*, and each give a *ball* on the occasion. The *block-heads* alone were confused, but even they said they would contribute their *sheaves*. The very *man-holes* spoke lovingly of the fair sex; and the *false keel* for once spoke truth, saying, 'He never saw such fun; but that he would be *at the bottom* of all this mystery.' What the effects of this might have been no one can tell, if all the above marriages had taken place; but just as all parties were ready for being spliced (the *marlin-spikes* acting as curates), it was found every gun was deep in *port*. But in the meantime the captain summoned all on deck and gave the following short but neat speech: 'My men,—Fill your glasses! Drink a bumper to the health of the young Laird of Kaildalloig. May he swim for many a year over the stormy ocean on which he has been launched. May neither his provisions nor cloth ever fail him; may he ever be steered by the helm of conscience, and go by the chart of duty and the compass of truth; and may every breeze that blows, and every sea that dashes carry him nearer a good haven. 'Hurrah!'"

This letter, like many of his letters, especially those

to his parents and intimate friends, was illustrated with pen-and-ink sketches of an appropriate and amusing character. Many of these were drawn with considerable skill, specimens of which are given in the biography by his brother. Among the most humorous are a series of imaginary portraits of himself, contained in a letter to Mr. Murray, written in reply to a note requesting his autograph, in which he describes himself as intellectual, serene, inquisitive, respectable, orthodox, and doubtful.

Sometimes his keen sense of the ridiculous seized him at the most unlikely moments, and he would relieve himself by scribbling off his ideas in rhyme. For instance, an amusing piece entitled "Captain Frazer's Nose," was written when he was enduring such violent pain that the night was spent in his study, and he had occasionally to bend over the back of a chair for relief. One of the best is a song entitled "The Waggin' o' our Dog's Tail," in which he described the supposed reflections of his dog Skye upon men and manners. This piece Norman frequently sung in his later years, accompanying the singing with a suggestive twirl of the thumb to indicate the approving "wag" of the tail, in a manner indescribably droll. We quote a verse or two of the fifteen stanzas composing it:

"We hae a dog that wags his tail
(He's a bit o' a wag himsel' O !);
Every day he gangs down the town,
At nicht his news to tell O !
The waggin' o' our dog's tail, bow-wow !
The waggin' o' our dog's tail !

"He saw the Provost o' the town,
Parading down the street O!
Quo' he, 'Ye're no like me, my lord,
For ye canna see your feet O!'

"He saw a man grown unco' poor,
And looking sad and sick O!
Quo' he, 'Cheer up, for ilka dog
Has aye a bane to pick O!'

"He saw some ministers fighting hard,
And a' frae a bit o' pride O!
'It's a pity,' quo' he, 'when dogs fa' out
Aboot their ain fireside O!'

"He saw a laddie swaggerin' big
Frae tap to tae sae trim O!
Quo' he, 'It's no' for a dog to laugh
That ance was a pup like him O!'

"Our doggie he cam' hame at e'en,
And scarted baith his lugs O!
Quo' he, 'If folk had only tails,
They'd be maist as gude as dogs O!'

In 1845 Norman was appointed one of the three persons deputed by the General Assembly to visit the congregations connected with the Church of Scotland in British North America. His notes respecting this visit are extremely interesting. The following contains a neat reproof of those Englishmen who pay a cursory visit to such a country, and on their return publish the results of their "mature" and "extensive" observations.

"*Boston.*—I have been actually three days in Boston. Do you not think I am well entitled to give a sound opinion upon American manners? I have lived in one of her hotels, heard two of her preachers, seen two of her Sabbath schools; I have driven in her cabs and

omnibuses, visited her jails and lunatic asylums, smoked her cigars, read her newspapers, and visited Lowell; and may I not be permitted to 'guess' what sort of people they are? I was prepared on Saturday to pronounce a judgment on the whole nation; but, happening to be wrong in my first opinion, I shut up my note-book. I had mounted the box of a coach; the driver sat on my left hand; he said he always did. Just as I had noted the great fact that 'all drivers in America sit on the left side of the box,' I thought I would ask him what was gained by this. 'Why, I guess,' replied Jonathan, 'I can't help it; I'm left-handed.' I learned a lesson from this: to beware how I generalise."

At one place he met with an old gentleman named Dr. M——, who had a frightful stammer. They were driving together through the forest on a dreadfully hot day, when the doctor, who was in a tremendous heat from the conjoined labour of driving and stammering, began to implore Mr. Macleod to send them a minister. "We d-d-don't expect a v-v-very c-c-clever man, but would be quite pleased to have one who could g-g-give us a p-p-plain every-day s-s-s-ermon like what you g-gave us yourself to-day!" In reply to Norman's inquiry as to how they got on, he said. "I t-tried to col-col-ect the pe-pe-people to hear a s-s-s-s-sermon; but s-somehow or other they did not c-come to hear me again! It was t-too b-bad!" "Poor fellow, fancy him reading a sermon!"

In 1857 he was attacked by a serious illness, which was attended with so much pain that he had frequently

to pass the greater part of the night in his chair, though he was generally at his post of labour in the parish during the day. After a return from a tour in Switzerland, Mrs. Macleod was laid prostrate by fever, and for several weeks her life was despaired of. These were days of great searching of heart with him as his journals show. "He literally wrestled in prayer, and fought inch by inch against self-will, until he was able to say, in peaceful submission, 'Thy will be done'" Ever after "he lived more entirely for God, and became much more tender, considerate, and patient towards others than he had ever been. There was no lessening of the old joyousness and genial humour; but he seemed to care less for the opinions of men, and looked more than ever to God alone."

In 1861, writing as usual on his birthday to his "beloved parents," he says: "If my birthdays are now more sobered than they were in early youth, they are far more joyful. I every year bless God with a fuller heart that I exist, and have lived in such an atmosphere of earthly love."

"Sobered" though he was, his exuberant fun occasionally broke out, like the pent-up stream, with almost irresistible force. Witness the following letter to his mother on his fifty-sixth birthday:—

"June 3rd.

"I am quite safe in saying that I have written to you say forty letters on my birthday; and whatever was defective as to number in my letters was made up by your love. Now I am beginning to think the whole

affair is getting stale to you. . . Don't you feel grateful I was born? Are you not thankful? I know you are, and no wonder. I need not enumerate all those well-known personal and domestic virtues which have often called forth your praises, except when you were beaten at backgammon. But there is another side of the question with which I have to do, and that is, whether I ought to be so very grateful to you for the event with which June 3rd, 1812, is associated. As I advance in life this question becomes more interesting to me; and it seems due to the interests of truth and justice to state, on this day, when I have had fifty-six years experience of life in its most varied forms, that I am by no means satisfied with your conduct on that occasion; and that if you fairly consider it, I feel assured you will justify me in demanding from you the only reparation possible—an ample apology, and a solemn promise never to do the like again! You must acknowledge that you took a very great liberty with a man of my character and position, not to ask me whether I was disposed to enter upon a new and important state of existence; whether I should prefer winter or summer to begin the trial; or whether I should be a Scotchman, Irishman, or Englishman; or even whether I should be 'man or woman born;' each of these alternatives involving to me most important consequences. What a good John Bull I should have made! what a rattling, roaring Irishman! what a capital mother or wife! what a jolly abbess! But you doomed me to be born in a tenth-rate provincial town, half Scotch, half Highland,

and sealed my doom as to sex and country. Was that fair? Would you like me to have done that to you? Suppose through my fault you had been born a wild Spanish Papist, what would you have said on your fifty-seventh birthday, with all your Protestant convictions? Not one Maxwell or Duntroon related to you! You yourself a nun called St. Agnese! and all, forsooth, because I had willed that you should be born at Toledo on June 3rd, 1812! Think of it, mother."

He then proceeds to remind her of all he had suffered for fifty-six years, and after enumerating the various ills to which he had been exposed, asks: "Why all this if not simply and solely because of your conduct on June 3rd, 1812? No wonder it is a solemn and sad day to you! No wonder you sigh, and—unless all good is out of you—weep too. I was told my poor father, on the day I was born, hid himself in a hayrick from sheer anxiety. He had some idea of what was doing. But, dear soul! he always gave in to you, and it was in vain for either of us to speak. I am told I yelled very loud —I hope I did—I could do no more then; and I can do little more now than protest, as I do, against the whole arrangement. . . . . One good quality remains: I can forgive, and I do forgive you this day, in pledge of which I send you my love, big as my body, yea without limit, and as large a kiss as my beard and moustache will permit."

Having been reminded of a promise to preach a sermon for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, he wrote: "I beseech you to have mercy on

me as an animal, and get some other brute, equally willing and more able than I am, to preach your sermon. I have seven sermons to preach for collections in other churches before January, and I am engaged three times every Sunday till April, besides tons of other work on my back. I ask mercy with the donkey, dog, or carter's horse. . . . I'll feed the next starved dog handsomely, shelter for a week the next wandering cat I meet, even put my shoulder to the next over-loaded cart of coal or iron I see. . . . In the name of every hard-used brute, lay or clerical, animal or spiritual, I crave your mercy. Yours in trouble."

It appears, however, that the committee still urged their request for help, for we find him, in reply to another application, saying: "I shall honestly try to be with you, if possible, before the meeting is over, to say a few words for my brother donkeys, and all animals who, like myself, are too severely handled and cudgelled by the public. In such suffering you will, I know, sympathise." At this time he was almost overwhelmed with work, but "his irrepressible humour and self-forgetfulness concealed from the eyes of strangers the burden he was often bearing alike of mental anxiety and bodily pain."

Shortly afterwards he took a tour, during which he wrote to his mother, stating that he had addressed Presbyteries and public meetings at place after place, and that he was "not suffering from sore throat, sore back, sore heart, lungs, brains, nerves, muscles, sinews, legs, arms, back, neck, heels, toes—but am from tip to

toe, jolly ; " while at the same time he blessed God that his work went on " beautifully. I feel more thankful than I can tell, and I am in perfect peace and in great feather."

His wit and humour were not only of great service to himself, but to others. On his voyage to India it helped to relieve the tediousness of the passage, and lessen the cares and anxieties of his fellow-passengers ; and during his visit to that country did much to make the deputation of which he was a member, more than welcome to the assemblies and persons to which they were introduced, and " gained them access to persons and sources of information which, without any wish to disoblige, would have been shut to most other men."

Macleod's humour, like that of Sydney Smith, and many other celebrated humorists, was most visibly manifested in his conversation and intercourse with friends. It depended so much upon his look, voice, and manner, that it is impossible to give anything like an idea of it by mere verbal description. It was only when " you sat with him all alone in his study, with none to hear but one familiar friend in whose sympathy he could fully rely, that his whole soul came out in all its breadth and rich variety, touching every chord of human feeling, and ranging from common earth to highest heaven. Thus anecdote, reflection, argument, bright flashes of imagination, drollest humour, most thrilling pathos, and solemn thoughts wandering through eternity, all blended into one conversation, the like of which you never listened to before. In a moment he would pass

from some comical illustration of human character to the most serious reality of sacred truth, and you would feel no discord. In other hands there would have been a jar, but not in his."

But we are approaching the limits of our space, and numerous passages we had marked must be omitted. One passage, however, we cannot refrain from quoting, illustrating, as it does, his views on the general subject of this volume, and the light in which he looked upon humour as he drew near to the end of his useful life. It is taken from his journal, and is dated:

"Sunday, July 19 (1868).

"What are called innocent enjoyments, with much which makes up and adds to the happiness of life—poetry, painting, smiles, and laughter, the sallies of playful wit, or the quiet chuckle, the delightful emotions—half smiles, half tears—created by humour, the family fun on summer evenings in the open air—all that kind of life which we enjoy and remember with such enjoyment (albeit mingled with sadness, not for what it was, but because it is not), why is this not associated in our minds with saintship and holiness? Is it because those who are not holy possess it all? Yet this would only prove the liberality of God, and not the sinfulness of man, or any inconsistency in saints partaking of it. Is it that such happiness is sin? This cannot be. It would be a libel on all our instincts and feelings and the whole round of life as appointed by God. Is it that we have formed wrong ideas of saintship, and created, as in mediæval art, such notions as would make saintship

impossible, or utterly *outre* and grotesque in the Exchange, or behind the counter, or on a Railway Board, or committee of Parliament? Yet it is in such places we need saints most. Or is it that we make such men as the apostles examples of what all men should be, and thence conclude that if so, the life I have alluded to must be wrong, earthly, and unworthy of men, as it could not be theirs? But again; I look at the flowers Christ has made, and listen to His singing birds, whose bills, and throats, and instincts He has made, and con over all the gay and beautiful 'trifles' He has attended to as the Maker of the world, and which He called 'very good,' and in which He has pleasure, and so the 'Methodistical' view of life does not hold. But may not a life in harmony with this, in which the small flowers, and the small singing birds, and the perfumes, and the lights and shadows and sparkling waves, shall hold their own with the great mountains and mighty oceans, and intellectual and moral harmonies among God's great beings, be the normal state of things, and be reproduced in the new heavens and the new earth? The sorrows and sadness of Christ, and of men like St. Paul, would thus be abnormal, conditioned by the evil of sin. They would be as the sadness of a family because of a death and burial, but which was not their natural condition. The world's greatest men, in God's sense, God's own elect ones, the kings and princes of humanity, are thus necessarily the greatest sufferers. It is given them to suffer with Christ as the highest honour, for it is the honour and glory of seeing things as

they are in the true and eternal light which no mere man can see and live. But such men must die and be buried in the grave of sorrow, crucified by the world's sin.

"Yet let this occasion of sorrow be taken away, and why might not a St. Paul be a child again, and chase butterflies, gather flowers, and shout with joy among the heather? It is a great gift to be able to be happy at all, and see, however dimly, into life and death. Those who imitate these holy men only in their sadness and sorrow, practise a vain guise, like a mask, and fancy the signs of grief or grief itself to be a virtue, and not a misfortune, and glorious only as a sign of an inner love—the light which casts the shadow. Those who seek happiness for its own sake, and call it innocent, and think it lawful without the eternal good, are vain as larks who would only live for singing, and silly as flowers who see nothing in creation but their own colours, and perceive nothing but their own perfume.

"A mountain once rebuked a rivulet for always foaming and making a noise. The rivulet replied that the ocean often did the same. 'Yes,' said the mountain, 'but the ocean has its depths and calms: but you have neither.'"

Macleod exercised wonderful power over the masses, and won all hearts by his loving sympathy and hearty recognition of their common brotherhood. He gathered into his Barony Church a host of zealous workers, who had caught from him the true spirit of the great Master. Of one of these he speaks as follows: "Tom Baird, the

carter, the beadle of my working-man's church, was as noble a fellow as ever lived—God-fearing, true, unselfish. I shall never forget what he said when I asked him to stand at the door of the working-man's congregation, and when I thought he was unwilling to do so in his working clothes. 'If,' said I, 'you don't like to do it, Tom; if you are ashamed——' Ashamed!' he exclaimed, as he turned upon me; 'I'm mair ashamed o' yersel', sir. Div ye think that I believe, as ye ken I do, that Jesus Christ who died for me, was stripped o' his raiment on the cross, and that I——Na, na, I'm prood to stand at the door.' Dear, good fellow! There he stood for seven winters, without a sixpence of pay; all from love, though at my request the working congregation gave him a silver watch. When he was dying from small pox the same unselfish nature appeared. When asked if they should let me know, he replied: 'There's nae man leevin' I like as I do him. I know he would come. But he shouldna' come on account of his wife and bairns, and so ye maunna' tell him!' I never saw him in his illness, never hearing of his danger till it was too late."

He was once on a Highland loch, accompanied by a clerical friend of diminutive size and appearance, who, on a storm coming on which threatened serious consequences, proposed that they should all join in prayer. "Na, na," said the chief boatman, "let the little ane gang to pray, but first the big ane maun take an oar."

While holding firmly the great fundamental truths of

our holy religion, Macleod manifested the warmest sympathy to them who differed from him on minor points, and carried this feeling so far as to be sometimes accused of Latitudinarianism, a charge which he indignantly denied. For the "Orthodox Pharisees" who held the truth in all uncharitableness he felt the utmost contempt. In the very last entry he made in his journal, which was written June 3rd, 1872, only a few days before his death, he says: "The last assembly has been the most reactionary I have ever seen; all because Dr. Cairns and other have attacked the church for her Latitudinarianism. The lectures of Stanley have aroused the wrath of the Pharisees, and every trembler wishes to prove that we are not Latitudinarian forsooth? If by this term is meant any want of faith in the Bible, or in the supernatural, or in Christ's person or atonement (though not the church theory), or in the essentials of the faith common to the Church Catholic; then I am no Latitudinarian. But if by this is meant that man's conscience or reason (in Coleridge's sense) is not the ultimate judge of a divine revelation; that I am bound to stick to the letter of the Confession; and to believe for example that all mankind are damned to 'excruciating torments in soul and body for all eternity,' because of Adam's sin, and the original corruption springing therefrom; and that God has sent a Saviour for a select few only, and that death determines the eternal condition of all men; then, thank God, I am a Latitudinarian, have preached it, confessed it,

can die for it! Nothing amazes or pains me more than the total absence of all pain, all anxiety, all sense of burden or of difficulty among nine-tenths of the clergy I meet, as to questions which keep other men sleepless. Give me only a man who knows, who feels, who takes in, however feebly (like myself), the life and death problems which agitate the best (yes, the best) and most thoughtful of clergy and laity; who thinks and prays about them; who feels the difficulties which exist; who has faith in God that the right will come right, in God's way, if not in his: I am strengthened, comforted, and feel deeply thankful to be taught. But what good can self-satisfied Ultramontanes do for a poor, weak, perplexed soul? Nay, what good can puppies do who may accept congenial conclusions without feeling the difficulties by which they are surrounded? What have I suffered and endured in this my little back study, which I must soon leave! How often from my books have I gazed out of this window before me, and found strength and peace in the little bit of the sky revealed, with its big *cumuli* clouds, its far-away *cirri* streaks; and further still, its deep, unfathomable blue—its infinite depths I could not pierce! yet seeing—in the great sunlight, in the glory of cloudland, in the peace of the sky—such a revelation of God as made me say, 'The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice!'"

Again he says: "You must take care lest by insisting on the minutiæ of doctrine or government you are not raising a barrier to the advance of Christianity. . .

Let them call me 'broad.' I desire to be broad as the charity of Almighty God, who maketh His sun to shine on the evil and on the good; who hateth no man, and who loveth the poorest Hindoo more than all their committees or their churches. But while I long for the breadth of charity, I desire the narrow—narrow as God's righteousness, which as a sharp sword, can separate between eternal right and eternal wrong."

CHAPTER XIV.

Thomas Binney (1798-1873).

MR. BINNEY was born at Newcastle-on-Tyne, April 30th, 1798. Though in early life he was engaged in a most laborious employment, which occupied him from seven in the morning until eight in the evening, he contrived to find time for self-improvement, keeping up his Latin and Greek, and labouring to secure a good English style. He afterwards became a student in what was afterwards embodied in New College, and in 1824 was ordained to the pastorate of the Independent Church, Newport, Isle of Wight. After five years successful ministry there he accepted an invitation from the church at the Weigh House, London, and entered upon a course of usefulness and popularity, which for forty years he sustained with increasing vigour and success. He was popular as an author, and in great request as a lecturer, though he disliked platform speaking. In 1848, he was appointed Chairman of the Congregational Union, and for two or three years before his death filled with great acceptance the chair of Homiletics at New College.

He died after a short illness, February 24th, 1873. His last words were "The Good God;" "The Eternal World;" "Salvation."

Paxton Hood, in his "Lamps, Pitchers, and Trumpets," places Mr. Binney side by side with Latimer and South. No man of our times, probably, possessed more humour and humanity than he. Great as a thinker, so much so that he is considered by many to have been the most intellectual preacher of his age, his humour was quite equal to his power of thought.

He had "a commanding presence, a speaking countenance, and an intellectual brow. He was lofty in stature, and his mind matched his body. To great intellect he united great benevolence. Every movement which tended to the social improvement of his fellow men, and contributed to the amelioration of the human race, found in him a ready helper and a hearty friend."

When Mr. Binney visited Australia an article appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, in which the writer, speaking of the causes of his popularity, says: "We have heard one gentleman who wrote a paper on Mr. Binney assigned as a principal cause of his popularity the possession, in a large degree, of humour, as distinguished from wit, which in him most frequently flowed forth in delicate irony or trenchant satire. With this acute remark, to a great extent we agree. His, however, is not the grim, inferno-like humour of Swift or Carlyle, so merciless and savage, but genial and loving, like that which throws its sweet witchery over the fascinating page of Scott; though a tendency to controversy, and a

delight in hitting an adversary with the "gloves off," often imparts to Mr. Binney's humour the pungency and sarcastic power of the old Puritan-hating South."

At a meeting once in the old Congregational Library, where a pretty considerable amount of confusion of opinion prevailed, he got up and moved that they "adjourn until that day fortnight at Ephesus." The laughter was immense, and therefore, says one who was present, "we all broke up and adjourned."

There used to be numerous stories floating about respecting his eccentricities and manifold oddities. These showed themselves even in public worship. Once, for instance, Dr. Harris, on learning that a celebrated minister advertised to preach one of the opening sermons of his new chapel, would be prevented by sudden illness from doing so, ran off to Binney and pressed him to supply the vacancy. "But you know, Brother Harris, a man can't go in this way; to-morrow, you say? I am quite unprepared, you know. No, no; get somebody else." "Oh! for that, you know," said Harris, "any sermon from you will do; preach that sermon you gave to them at ——." "Oh, very well, very well; then I'll come." He went, preached, got on very well through two heads of discourse, then stopped, looked down over the pulpit,—"Brother Harris, what was thirdly.?" and Brother Harris having mentioned thirdly, the preacher was himself again.

Once he attended an ordination service, where he had to give what is called the charge to the minister, before which comes what is termed a statement of the nature

and constitution of a Christian Church. The brother who did this last was not only very long-winded, but dry, dreary, desultory, and doleful—perhaps not altogether displeased with the opportunity of shedding the corruscations from his darkness over the mind of so unusual an auditor as Mr. Binney. But his distinguished hearer was very fidgetty, amounting even to being badly behaved. His own deliverance was to come shortly, and this was not a nice prelude to it. He stretched his legs, he gaped—such a gape! but at last the end came. He rose to his full height. As the speaker said "Amen," Mr. Binney said, "That's a mercy," and darted away into the vestry.

When Mr. Binney's "Best of Both Worlds" was published, it fell into the way of a gentleman who had a living at his disposal. The book was evidently the production of a minister. He looked at the "Clergy List," and found a Binney there. He wrote instructions to his solicitor to present the living to Mr. Binney. On the incumbent presenting himself before his patron to thank him, the latter said, "Ah! I am very glad to have an opportunity of seeing you, sir. It was a little acknowledgment of your estimable book. Is it possible to make the best of both worlds." Aghast, the incumbent had to confess that the book was the production of a Dissenting minister! However, we suppose he was safely ensconced in his living.

He was exceedingly amused on one occasion with an incident that occurred while travelling from the north to London. He had been the sole occupant of a first-class compartment, but when about half the journey was over he was joined by a clerical-looking gentleman, and

the two were soon engaged in friendly intercourse. Mr. Binney's companion was a dignitary of the Church of England, and during the conversation, finding his *vis-à-vis* was a Dissenter, expressed his pleasure at meeting with so intelligent and liberal a specimen of that class. "Indeed," said he, "I entertain the highest regard for many members of your body, but there is one fellow I can't find in my heart to forgive,—it's that Binney, who is reported to have said that the Church of England had ruined more souls than she had saved; and if ever I meet with him I shall feel inclined to kick him." The Dissenting minister passed over the remark, and the conversation continued until the end of the journey was reached. On preparing to part the clergyman presented his card to Mr. Binney, saying at the same time, "I shall be glad to exchange with you, sir." Mr. B. seemingly took no notice until, the request being repeated, he said, with one of his sly looks, "I should not like to be kicked." "To be kicked," said the astonished dignitary: "To be kicked! my dear sir, do I misunderstand you?" "No," was the reply, "I said I should not like to be kicked—I'm that fellow Binney!" A hearty laugh followed, and the dignitary declared that his last bit of prejudice was removed.

Speaking of Sir Fowell Buxton, he says:—"The only thing I have heard of lately, as particularly scandalising some parties, is Sir Fowell's fondness for shooting. They cannot understand it. There is a mystery in the thing. The idea of a man having family worship, reading the Bible, and then going out with a gun! Still more, that he should write down, with the same pen, an

account of his shooting into the sky against the birds, and then something about his soul soaring above it by faith and prayer! It is strange—suspicious—inexplicable! They cannot make it out. I really believe that many good and pious people are seriously distressed by the thought of this matter; while others, who dislike an Evangelical, or abhor a Whig, make themselves merry, or pretend to be serious, over Buxton's inconsistency. Had he only happened to have been simply orthodox, or a 'high and dry,' and 'on the right side,' he he might have passed for a 'pillar,' or a 'buttress,' of the good old sort, if he had not had more religion in the whole of his great big body than he really had in his little finger."

After showing that Buxton's shooting had never been associated with any vicious habits, or low and sensual pursuits, even before his conversion, he adds: "Depend upon it some Christians shun things that others can approach, because, in the one case, there is the painful recollection of perversion and abuse; and in the other there is nothing but the innocent and rational use of an allowable liberty or a defensible indulgence. I would not willingly lower the standard of Christian conduct. I think the more a man is above an excessive or enslaving attachment to shooting, or boating, or anything else, so much the better; but I also think that there is a great lesson for the young in the fact, that while 'to the pure all things are pure,' 'to them that are defiled there is nothing pure.' He who has 'preserved himself unspotted'; who has lived without darkening the recollections of memory, or poisoning the springs of thought; who has been kept from the pollutions that

are in the world through lust; who has not forfeited his right to look round him with a sparkling eye and a merry heart; such an one, however spiritual he may become, will always regard with candour and love the conduct of others, and will feel, too, that his religious growth requires but little to be positively abandoned in his own. Religion is the enemy of no pleasure consistent with innocence."

Mr. Binney has been frequently compared with South. He did not disdain to rouse his audiences occasionally to something more perceptible than a smile. It was indeed impossible to attend his ministry without hearing, at some sly and pat allusion, or some passing personal anecdote, a universal titter over the whole congregation. "Just such a titter," says Paxton Hood, "we once heard when he was describing a visit to an Irvingite chapel; and after an account of the robes and ceremonies, he climaxed the picture by speaking of the angels as full-grown boys of five feet four playing at priests."

Humorous as Mr. Binney was in the pulpit, his published works are quite free from that with which his public ministrations abounded. They are, however, the opposite of being dull, and will well repay the careful perusal of those of our readers who are anxious to cultivate both "the corn-fields and pleasure-grounds" of their minds.

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