

OTHER FAMOUS CHRISTIANS

THOMAS A KEMPIS.

Those who are acquainted with the well known booklet "The Imitation of Christ" have doubtless been impressed with the thought that the author of so deeply spiritual a book must have had such trials of faith, such self-crucifixion, and such fellowship with God as is only known to those who "dwell in the secret place of the Most High." Such was true of Thomas a Kempis, whose little book has been published in every civilized tongue, and has been a means of blessing for centuries.

A Kempis was born at Cologne, in 1380, and was very pious from his early youth. He was brought up in a religious school and at nineteen years of age became a monk of the Augustinian order. He filled many of the highest offices in this order before his death, which occurred when he was ninety two years of age. His conversion to Christ took place during his novitiate, after he was deeply convicted of sin and after he had suffered many inward struggles. After this he had many fierce conflicts of soul as is very apparent from his writings. "O, how great," he exclaims, "has been the mercy of God towards me! How often, when I was almost overcome, has He been my deliverer! Sometimes my passions assailed me as a whirlwind; but God sent forth His arrows and dissipated them. The attack was often renewed, but God was still my support. By degrees I was weaned from everything earthly, and adhered to God alone. Then, I experienced how sweet, how full of mercy God is to those who truly love Him. O my God! how merciful hast Thou been to me! Many have been forsaken by Thee, and are lost, who were less guilty than I am. But Thy mercies are unspeakable. 'Let the worthless one (sayest Thou) draw near to Me, that he may be made worthy; the wicked one, that he may be converted; the imperfect one, that he may be made perfect; let all draw near to Me, and taste the living waters of salvation. It is my delight to be with the children of men' "

WILLIAM PENN.

William Penn, the famous Quaker who founded Pennsylvania, who wrote "No Cross, No Crown," and who won many souls for Christ, was qualified by birth, talents, and education to be one of the leading noblemen of Great Britain. Like Moses, he renounced all worldly honors to suffer bitter persecution with the children of God. He even suffered imprisonment with the then despised Quakers.

William Penn was under deep religious impressions as a child, and was converted to Christ at twelve years of age. He made a full consecration of everything to God in 1666, when twenty-two years of age, after hearing the Quaker preacher Thomas Lee preach about "The Faith that Overcomes the World." In his book "The Guide Mistaken," written in defence of the Quakers, or Friends, he thus describes the teaching of the Friends regarding the doctrine of Christian Perfection:

"Perfection from sin they hold to be attainable, because he that is born of God sins not, and that nothing which is unclean can enter the kingdom of God; no crown without victory; the little leaven leavens the whole lump; the strong man must be cast out. Paul prays they might be sanctified wholly; be ye perfect as God is perfect; be perfect, be of good comfort; unto a perfect man; as many as be perfect; that the man of God may be perfect; the God of peace make you perfect in every good work; the God of all grace

make you perfect; let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God; etc.

'^And as my faithful testimony both to their life and doctrine, I declare, and be it known to all that ever knew me, that when the unspeakable riches of God's love visited me, by the call of His glorious light, from the dark practices, wandering notions, and vain conversation of this polluted world, and that my heart was influenced thereby, and consequently disposed for the more intimate and sincere reception of it; those very habits which I once judged impossible, whilst here, to have relinquished, and did allow myself a liberty therein, because not openly gross or scandalous, became not only burdensome, and by that light were manifested to be of another nature than that which I was called to the participation of ; but in my faithful adherence to its holy counsel and instructions, I was immediately endued with a power that gave dominion over them."

DR. ADAM CLARKE.

Dr. Adam Clarke, the great commentator and preacher, was one of the most famous of the early Methodist ministers, and he is ranked as one of the greatest of Bible scholars. He insisted on preachers urging people to seek an experience of entire sanctification, and he preached frequently on the same theme with great unction and power. His powerful treatise on "Purity of Heart" was written to show Christians their privilege of being "filled with all the fulness of God."

Dr. Clarke is known everywhere as a writer of great learning, but it is not so generally known that he preached to immense audiences and was one of the most successful preachers in the itinerancy of the early Methodist Church. That he enjoyed a very deep Christian experience himself is very evident from all his writings. In "Purity of Heart" he says: "As there is no end to the merits of Christ incarnated and crucified; no bounds to the mercy and love of God; no let or hindrance to the almighty energy and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit; no limits to the improvability of the human soul; so, there can be no bounds to the saving influence which God will dispense to the heart of every genuine believer. We may ask and receive, and our joy shall be full! Well may we bless and praise God, 'who has called us into such a state of salvation; ' a state in which we may be thus saved; and, by the grace of that state, continue in the same to the end of our lives.

"As sin is the cause of the ruin of mankind, the Gospel-system which exhibits its cure is fitly called 'good news,' or 'glad tidings;' and it is good news, because it proclaims Him who saves His people from their sins; and it would indeed be dishonorable to that grace, and the infinite merit of Him who procured it, to suppose, much more to assert, that sin had made wounds which grace would not heal. Of such a triumph Satan shall ever be deprived."

WILLIAM BRAMWELL.

Inseparably connected with the greatest names of early Methodism are the names of Bramwell and Carvosso.

Rev. William Bramwell, who lived at the same time as Wesley, sang as a choir-boy in the Church of England during his earlier years. After suffering under conviction of sin for many months, he was brightly converted to Christ and became an earnest worker for the salvation of souls. Later he became a class-

leader, and finally a minister in the Methodist Church. He was full of zeal, and many souls were led to Christ. Yet he yearned for a still deeper Christian experience.

" I was for some time deeply convinced of my need of purity," says he, " and sought carefully with tears, entreaties, and sacrifice; thinking nothing too much to give up, nothing too much to do or suffer, if I might but attain this pearl of great price. Yet I found it not; nor knew the reason why till the Lord showed me I had erred in the way of seeking it. I did not seek it by faith alone, but as it were, by the works of the law. Being now convinced of my error, I sought the blessing by faith only. Still it tarried a little, but I waited for it in the way of faith. When in the house of a friend at Liverpool, whither I had gone to settle some temporal affairs, previously to my going out to travel, while I was sitting, as it might be, on this chair (pointing to his chair), with my mind engaged in various meditations concerning my present affairs and future prospects, my heart now and then lifted up to God, but not particularly about this blessing, heaven came down to earth; it came to my soul. The Lord, for whom I had waited, came suddenly to the temple of my heart ; and I had an immediate evidence that this was the blessing I had for some time been seeking. My soul was then all wonder, love and praise."

After receiving the above experience, great power was given him. Thousands were converted to Christ in his meetings. Many sick were healed in answer to his prayers, and remarkable discernment was given him to see and know the spiritual condition of others.

WILLIAM CARVOSSO.

One of the most striking examples of what God can do for a man without natural talents, without education, and without worldly advantages of any kind, is found in the "Memoirs of William Carvosso."

Truly converted from a life of sin at twenty-one years of age, Carvosso soon afterward sought for and obtained a still deeper Christian experience, after which he became a great means of blessing to thousands of persons with whom he prayed and conversed personally. He was one of the greatest soul-winners of the early Methodist Church. He served as class-leader in the Methodist Church in England for over sixty years. He learned to write after he was sixty-five years of age.

Of his deeper experience, Carvosso says: "What I now wanted was 'inward holiness'; and for this I prayed and searched the Scriptures. Among the number of promises, which I found in the Bible, that gave me to see it was my privilege to be saved from all sin, my mind was particularly directed to Ezekiel 36:25-27. . . This is the great and precious promise of the eternal Jehovah, and I laid hold of it, determined not to stop short of my privilege; for I saw clearly the will of God was my sanctification. ... At length, one evening, while engaged in prayer-meeting, the great deliverance came. I began to exercise faith, by believing, 'I shall have the blessing now.' Just at that moment a heavenly influence filled the room; and no sooner had I uttered or spoken the words from my heart, 'I shall have the blessing now,' than refining fire went 'through my heart, — illuminated my soul, — scattered its life through every part, and sanctified the whole.'

I then received the full witness of the Spirit that the blood of Jesus Christ had cleansed me from all sin. I cried out 'This is what I wanted! I have now got a new heart O what boundless, boundless happiness there is in Christ and all for such a poor sinner as I am! This happy change took place in my soul March 13, 1772.'

DAVID BRAINERD.

David Brainerd, the consecrated missionary, endured almost incredible hardships while laboring among the American Indians; but he lived so close to God that his life has been an inspiration to many. His biography was written by Jonathan Edwards, was revised by John Wesley, and influenced the life of Dr. A. J. Gordon more than any other book outside the Bible.

Such intense longings and prayers after holiness as we read of in the journals of Brainerd are scarcely recorded anywhere else. "I long for God, and a conformity to His will, in inward holiness, ten thousand times more than for anything here below," says he. On Oct. 19, 1740, he wrote: "In the morning, I felt my soul hungering and thirsting after righteousness. In the forenoon, while I was looking on the sacramental elements, and thinking that Jesus Christ would soon be 'Set forth crucified before me,' my soul was filled with light and love, so that I was almost in an ecstasy; my body was so weak I could hardly stand. I felt at the same time an exceeding tenderness and most fervent love towards all mankind; so that my soul, and all the powers of it seemed, as it were, to melt into softness and sweetness. This love and joy cast out fear, and my soul longed for perfect grace and glory."

Many were the manifestations of the Spirit in his meetings and during his numerous seasons of fasting and prayer and longings for holiness of life. He seems to have risen above the things of this world to a remarkable degree. In his journal of March 10, 1743, he says: "I felt exceeding dead to the world and all its enjoyments: I was ready to give up life, and all its comforts, as soon as called to it; and yet then had as much comfort of life as almost ever I had. Life itself appeared but an empty bubble; the riches, honors, and enjoyments of it extremely tasteless. I longed to be entirely crucified to all things here below. My soul was sweetly resigned to God's disposal of me; and I saw there had nothing happened to me but what was best for me. ... It was my meat and drink to be holy, to live to the Lord, and die to the Lord. And I then enjoyed such a heaven, as far exceeded the most sublime conceptions of an unregenerate soul; and even unspeakably beyond what I myself could conceive at another time."

EDWARD PAYSON.

Edward Payson was the most illustrious of the great Congregational preachers of New England. "His pulpit utterances," say McClintock and Strong, "were of the most startling and uncompromising character. It may be truly said of Edward Payson that he labored not to please men, but God; and his pulpit thundered and lightened like another Sinai against every form of ungodliness and iniquity." Over seven hundred persons were received into the church at Portland, Maine, under the pastorate of Payson.

Payson was born in 1783, was precocious as a child, and at three years of age he wept under the preaching of a sermon. He was a good reader when four years old. In 1803 he graduated from Harvard College. He was definitely converted to Christ in 1804. After completing a theological course, he was ordained in 1807.

On September 19, 1827, Payson wrote from his sick-bed, in a letter to his sister:

"Were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks the happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into

my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears as but an insignificant rill, that may be crossed at a single step whenever God shall give permission. The Sun of Righteousness has gradually been drawing nearer, appearing larger and brighter as He approached, and now He fills the whole hemisphere, pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun; exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering, with unutterable wonder, why God should deign thus to shine upon a sinful worm. A single heart and a single tongue seem altogether inadequate to my wants. I want a whole heart for every separate emotion, and a whole tongue to express that emotion."

Not long before he expired, he said: " My soul is filled with joy unspeakable. I seem to swim in a flood of glory, which God pours down upon me."

DOROTHEA TRUDEL.

Marvelous are the answers to prayer recorded in the book entitled, "Dorothea Trudel, or The Prayer of Faith." Dorothea's mother was a woman of great faith, and believed that God provided for her large family and kept them in good health in answer to the prayer of faith. Dorothea had such faith that hundreds were healed in answer to her prayers, and her name became known all over the world. Travelers in Switzerland often heard about the marvelous cures wrought in the remote village of Mannendorf in answer to Dorothea Trudel's prayers.

Dorothea Trudel was born in 1813 and died in 1862. She was converted to Christ at twenty-two years of age, after being so deeply convicted of sin that many thought she was dying. Some years after this she was led into a still deeper Christian experience, which she describes as follows:

"I persevered in working at my trade for a year, during which time the Lord continued to show me much that tended to my self-abasement. I learned that bodily suffering cannot produce conformity to God, even when it is borne with patience; that the only way in which that grace can be attained is by the outpouring of the love of God in the heart. I did not know before what was meant by being 'nothing,' and yet I had considered myself converted. But now the Lord opened my eyes, and showed me that the annoyance I felt to this hour, when tried by any difficulty, arose from the presence of 'the old man' and that if I possessed the love described in 1 Cor. 13, which 'is not easily provoked,' and 'seeketh not her own,' I should no longer be provoked to such irritation: from that time the Lord has so strengthened me night and day that the wonders which have taken place in accordance with God's Word will be less marveled at than that I am still spared and strengthened to labor."

PASTOR BLUMHARDT.

Almost identical with the great miracles of healing wrought through the prayers and faith of Dorothea Trudel in Switzerland, were those wrought in answer to the prayers of the German pastor John Christoph Blumhardt, who was born in 1805 and died in 1880. Hundreds of invalids flocked to him at Mottlingen, and then at Bad Boll, and after being prayed for they left with complete healing.

Pastor Blumhardt commenced preaching at Mottlingen in 1828, soon after graduating from the great University of Tubingen. A remarkable case of deliverance of a woman, who seemed to be possessed with demons, took place in answer to his prayers. The whole village was stirred and a great revival followed, and his home was besieged all day by inquirers after the way of salvation. "Notwithstand-

ing all this," says he, " the feeling that this work of God would according to the usual course of things, in the long run, lose its vigor and freshness, made me more and more familiar with the thought that the church of Christ at large wants a new outpouring of the spirit of Pentecost, and that without this, nothing would be durable. This led me to pray for a new outpouring of the Spirit, and that without ceasing, the more so as the signs seemed to indicate that we are not far from the last times. The clearer I begin to see the corruption and manifold defects of present Christendom, the more unavoidable is to me supplication for its renewal, which can only be accomplished through a special movement of the Spirit of God from above."

His special pleading for the Holy Spirit was answered with an enduement with power from on high. After this he had so much power in preaching the gospel and in praying for the sick that his work grew to such an extent that he was compelled to procure the large government building at Boll, so that he could accommodate the sick who flocked from all over Europe, and even from America, that he might pray for their healing. The government sold the building to him at less than cost, and the King made a special donation to help him start his work at Boll.

PHOEBE PALMER.

Inseparably connected with the doctrine of entire consecration and sanctification are the names of Dr. and Mrs. Phoebe Palmer. After obtaining a deeper Christian experience themselves, the lives of these two consecrated evangelists were devoted to leading others into the same experience. The influence of their teachings can be traced in the lives of many noted Christians of both America and Britain. Mrs. Palmer is well known for her teaching of "Put all upon the altar, and the altar sanctifies the gift".

This figure was drawn from the fact that in Old Testament times the fire was always burning on the altar, and the sacrifice was consumed as soon as placed on the altar. So, Mrs. Palmer taught, the fire of the Holy Spirit is always burning on the altar of true consecration, ready to consume everyone who truly offers himself a living sacrifice to God.

For a long time after her conversion, Mrs. Palmer had a great desire to be sanctified, but she felt as though the blessing was too great for her to ever think of attaining to it. A close study of God's Word convinced her that He had commanded and expected all Christians to be holy, sanctified, "vessels unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use." "This is the will of God, even your sanctification," "For God hath not called you unto uncleanness, but unto holiness," "Be ye holy, for I am holy," "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," and many similar passages of Scripture convinced her of her need of holiness. Then she began to expect God to convict her deeply for the experience. At last her eyes were opened to see that "knowledge is conviction" and that the only conviction necessary was to be convinced of her need. She then began to seek earnestly for the experience. At first she felt that great agony and struggle of soul must be necessary to obtain the experience. But finally she was convinced that it was to be obtained by faith, as it was not necessary to struggle and agonize to obtain an experience which God commands and expects all Christians to have. She then trusted God for the experience, and could say with the writer of the hymn,

"When I gave all trying over.
Simply trusting, I was blessed."

In her widely circulated book, "The Way of Holiness," she relates her own experience, speaking in the third person, as follows:

"Over and over again, previous to the time mentioned, had she endeavored to give herself away in covenant to God. But she had never, till this hour, deliberately resolved on counting the cost, with the solemn intention to 'reckon herself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord' (Rom. 6: ii); to account herself permanently the Lord's, and in truth no more at her own disposal; but irrevocably the Lord's property, for time and eternity. Now, in the name of the Lord Jehovah, after having deliberately 'counted the cost,' she resolved to enter into the bonds of an everlasting covenant, with the fixed purpose to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus, that she might know Him and the power of His resurrection, by being made conformable to His death, and raised to an entire newness of life. . On doing this, a hallowed sense of consecration took possession of her soul," etc.

PHILIP BLISS

One of the most consecrated Christians as well as one of the greatest of gospel singers and hymn-writers was Philip Paul Bliss. He was taken away early in life, but before his departure wrote some of our best hymns, among them being, "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning," "Hold the Fort," "Windows Open Toward Jerusalem," "Free from the Law," "Only an Armour-Bearer," "Pull for the Shore, Sailors," "The Light of the World is Jesus," "Whosoever Will," "Almost Persuaded," "I Am So Glad that Jesus Loves Me," "Hallelujah, 'Tis Done," "The Half Was Never Told," and many others.

P. P. Bliss was born in Pennsylvania in 1838, and was a poor country boy, but very fond of music. He was religiously inclined from his earliest youth, and made a public confession of Christ at a Baptist revival in 1850. After his marriage, and a short service in the Civil War, and a number of years spent in holding secular concerts, he became acquainted with Mr. Moody. Several years after this he was led to consecrate his entire life and services to God for the purpose of spreading the gospel in song.

In the memoirs of Bliss, by Major D. W. Whittle, we learn the story of how he was led to make the full consecration of his services. During the winters of 1873-4 Mr. Bliss received many letters from Mr. Moody, who was then in Scotland, urging him to give up his business, drop everything, and sing the gospel. Similar letters came to Major Whittle, urging him to go out with Bliss and hold meetings. Mr. and Mrs. Bliss were ready for this if they could see it as the Lord's will. But there was much prayer and hesitation on the part of Mr. Bliss before he reached a decision in the matter. He doubted his ability, and doubted whether the inclination he felt to go was from the Lord. But Mr. Moody continued to write, and Mr. H. G. Spafford, a mutual friend, also joined in urging Major Whittle and Mr. Bliss to go into the evangelistic work. Finally a door opened for them. Rev. C. M. Saunders, of Waukegan, Illinois, invited them to his church for three or four evenings as an experiment. Major Cole accompanied them on this trip. The first meeting was not an encouraging one in point of attendance, and there were no marked results except a powerful impression on the minds of the evangelists that the Lord was with them. The next day it rained and they looked for a small attendance, but the congregation was twice as large as the first, and a number of souls were led to Christ.

"Our hearts were very full," says Major Whittle, "and a great responsibility was upon us. The next afternoon we all three met in the study of the Congregational Church, where our meetings were held, and spent some hours in prayer. Bliss made a formal surrender of everything to the Lord; gave up his musical conventions; gave up his writing of secular music; gave up everything, and in a simple, childlike, trusting prayer, placed himself, with any talent, any power God had given him, at the disposal of the

Lord, for any use He could make of him in the spreading of His gospel. Dear Cole united with us in this consecration. It was a wonderful afternoon. As I think back upon the scene in that little study, and recall Bliss' prayer, and the emotions that filled us all in the sense of God's presence, the room seems lit up in my memory with a halo of glory."