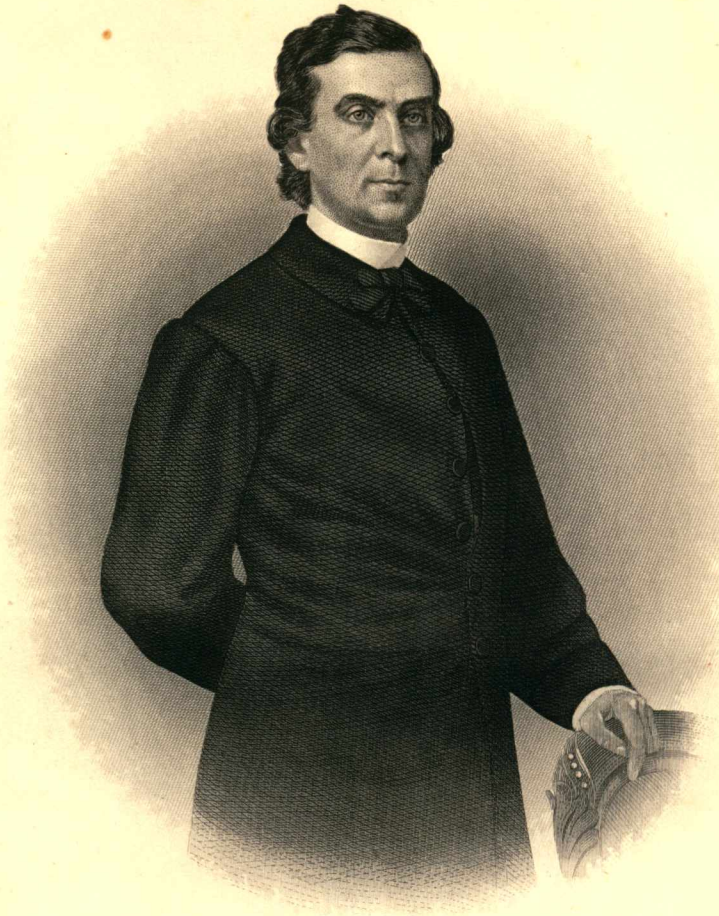
ALFRED COOKMAN.

THE LIFE OF

THE

REV. ALFRED COOKMAN.



Engd by R.O'Brien

Alfred Cookman

HARPER & BROTHERS, NEW YORK.

THE LIFE OF

THE

REV. ALFRED COOKMAN;

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS FATHER,

THE REV. GEORGE GRIMSTON COOKMAN.

BY

HENRY B. RIDGAWAY, D.D.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE REV. R. S. FOSTER, LL.D.,

Bishop of the M. E. Church.

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TO

MRS. MARY COOKMAN,

MOTHER OF ALFRED COOKMAN,

THE DEVOUT CHRISTIAN LADY WHO, THROUGH A LONG LIFE, HAS SO BEAUTIFULLY EXEMPLIFIED THE DOCTRINES TAUGHT BY HER SON,

This Volume is Affectionately Inscribed

BY

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER XXV.

CHAPTER XXVI.

INTRODUCTION.

THE lives of the good and great are the heritage of the ages. While they are with us they enrich us with our choicest treasures. When they depart from us they bequeath the still richer legacy of the memory of their noble deeds and exalted virtues —richer, because what was little and ignoble in them perishes with their dust; while only what was good and pure remains, taking on greater lustre after their translation. From their thrones in the heavens they shed down upon us a more potent influence than that which they excited when they were journeying the vale of our earthly suffering with us. They do not more really live in their far-off homes than in our memories and fond affections. We do not see them or touch them—much as we long to—but we feel their presence and power. We persuade ourselves that invisibly they linger in our homes as ministering angels — if not sharing our sorrows, at least watching in loving vigils over us.

As when they were alive we wanted every one to know and love them, so, being dead, we desire to transmit to unborn ages the knowledge of them. The desire, I take it, is not more natural than beautiful—not more honoring to the dead than ennobling to the living.

There is that in a true biography which charms us with a strange spell. We find in it, however it may differ from our own history and experiences, an image of our deepest self; which, under all varieties, is in substance the same in every humanity. We witness the same struggles of the better with the more ignoble qualities—the same alternations of doubt and trust, of fear and hope—the same sorrows and joys and loves—the same earthly and heavenly longings—the same tuggings at the heart—the same successes and defeats—the same all things that enter into this strange earthly life we are living—the same coming and going of the bright and dark days over the mottled landscape of our being. So we are rebuked and comforted, chided and encouraged on the same page. The communion, when the life we contemplate is on the whole beautiful and good, is healthful. Unconsciously we enter into its confluence, make it our own, and, with greater clearness than if it were actually ours, discern and appreciate its good and evil.

What a wonderful thing a human life is! Who considers it rightly? I do not now mean some human life, but any human life — not the life of the great more than the little. On some day — and it matters not when or where — the good God, Father of us all, lays a little babe on a woman's breast. It is a wee thing, just breathing a soft, sweet breath, the faintest ripple of an unconscious life—the merest germ. It is the dawn of an immortal history of strange, I was about to write divine, consciousnesses. Earthquakes rend the globe, great forces convulse, it may be, the sidereal universe,

but in that fragile bosom are stored potencies mightier than all material agencies — not so obvious, but infinitely greater. Helpless it lies there on the pillow of maternal love. The fountain springing at its lips nourishes it. It drinks and sleeps and grows. A little while and its dull eye grows bright. Inquisitive wonder looks out between the lids. The days and weeks and months swell into years. The baby is a boy—the boy a youth—the youth a man. Mustering up the years to the drum-beat of each pulse, come joys and sorrows, hopes and loves. Young manhood, with its witching ardors and exciting but too delusive hopes, stands, flushed with pride and ambition, before us. Real life is in the offing. As yet it opens with brightness and beauty. The gathering clouds show only the silver linings—it is morning, with the sweet breath of spring. But on behind these come other years. The dun level of middle manhood and mature age crowds quick upon the vanishing hold of youth. Now life is real and earnest. Sorrows and cares and labors flood all the moments to their brim — and heartaches and weariness come with the morning and thicken to the evening. The great, hard world, with its manifold evils, and the stormy eternity, with its terrors, open upon the gaze of the immortal spirit. The struggle is brief. Death strikes: one part of a life has been lived—the greater part remains. Such is the outline of each human history. To one there is more of evil, to another more of good; but the story is the same. Among these lives comes occasionally one of more than ordinary beauty, and men love to gaze on it and linger over it. It is the charm of the genera-

tion—of the ages. When it vanishes, the darkness shrouds us all.

Such was the life delineated in these pages. It rarely happens that so noble a subject finds so worthy a biographer. The book will be found crowded with beauty and entertainment from beginning to end. The story it tells will not be interesting to all; but to every admirer of the delicate delineation of pure and noble manhood it will be rich as a poem. It is more than a biography. The distinguished father is scarcely less the subject of the sketch than the gifted son. The writer has brought the entire Christian commonwealth under obligation, by restoring the lustre of an almost perished name, which was once the joy of all denominations in two hemispheres. Especially American Methodism, in which the name of George G. Cookman has been as sweet incense for two generations, will gladly acknowledge the debt.

Alfred Cookman, the immediate subject, has but lately passed away. His memory is yet fresh with us all—the memory of the joy we had of his rare ministry, and of the sorrow—yet unassuaged—that thrilled us all by his sudden death.

The work of delineating his character and reciting the story of his life is done in the following pages. Dr. Ridgaway, the life-long friend, not more qualified by close intimacies than by the rare and peculiar qualities of his own mind, has left nothing to be added or desired. It is a high commendation to his work to say that he has done justice to his subject. Yet I can not close this brief introduction without laying a small tribute on the shrine of Alfred Cookman, and it shall relate to

a single aspect of his character, which profoundly impressed me, as I think it did every one. I never thought him a genius. He was not, in my judgment, transcendently gifted. He was eloquent, and many times mighty in the pulpit. I am certain that this was the verdict of thousands that hung with delight and profit on his words. But it was not his great intellectual power, nor yet his persuasive eloquence, that impressed me chiefly. The one quality in which he seemed to me to rise above not only the mass of men and the select best, but, I must say it, above every man it has been my privilege to know, was the sacredness of his entire life. Not in the pulpit alone, not in the prayer-circle alone, nor in his pastoral walks exclusively, but every where and at all times he seemed invested—not with simulated sanctity—but a Christliness that was as beautiful as it was impressive. His own life was the ablest sermon he ever preached on the subject with which his name is so intimately associated. He lived "the higher life," even more than he preached it. His sweet, gentle, and holy walk was both more eloquent and convincing than his most impassioned discourses. His dying words—fitting culmination to his sacred life—will echo in Christian song down the centuries: "Sweeping through the gates, washed in the blood of the Lamb!"

R. S. FOSTER.

MADISON, N. J., *July*, 1873.

"Suffer me to imitate the passion of my God. My Love is crucified; there is no fire in me desiring earthly fuel; that which lives and speaks within me says—'Home to the Father.'"

St. Ignatius yearning for Martyrdom.

LIFE OF ALFRED COOKMAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE COOKMAN FAMILY.—GEORGE GRIMSTON COOKMAN.

THE REV. ALFRED COOKMAN was descended from a worthy ancestry. His father, the Rev. George Grimston Cookman, was a man of such powers and fame; his talents and reputation became, by so remarkable a providence, the inheritance of his son; his influence upon the son was so direct and continuous, that I find, in the absence of any adequate account of the father, it is quite impossible to do justice to either without dwelling more fully on the career of the father than a biography of the son would seem to allow. While it might be honor enough for George G. Cookman to be remembered as the father of Alfred, yet there was that in him—in what he was and did—which makes it proper that no extended memoir be given of the son without such a portraiture of the father as shall be in some degree worthy of his distinguished character and services.

My apology for dwelling longer on the annals of the father than is customary in such cases, is the simple desire to so present the name of Cookman, made illustrious first in the father, and maintained afterward in the son, as that it shall be transmitted an unbroken name, suggestive of sanctity, eloquence, and usefulness wherever known and pronounced.

George Grimston Cookman was born in the town of Kingston-upon-Hull, Yorkshire, England, October 21, 1800. His

parents were George and Mary Cookman. Of these parents George himself wrote in 1825 to Miss Mary Barton, who was then his betrothed, and afterward became his wife: "My father is the younger brother of an old English family who, as sturdy yeomanry, had resided upon their family estates in the east end of Holderness for five generations back. My father left home early in life, and at eighteen years of age became serious, and a member and local preacher in the Methodist Society. He is constant in all his purposes, and unwavering in all his attachments — a judicious rather than a romantic husband, a kind rather than a fond father. He is independent in his principles even to the verge of republicanism; what the world terms a downright honest man. Yet there are perplexing paradoxes in his character. Possessing genuine, active courage, he hides it under a natural diffidence and modesty; with deep and strong feeling, he will generally pass for what Alfred calls a phlegmatic melancholic. Indeed, he has brought himself under so severe mental discipline and such habitual caution, that he represses all that gives a glow to feeling or a brilliance to thought under the fear of committing himself. But when you can draw him out of his shell, you find he can conceive and feel and speak with both brilliance and power. As a Christian, he is eminently consistent, liberal, and unwavering. I have sometimes thought that his habitual judgment has induced a want of faith in temporal matters, but I have met with few men so even and constant in their religious walk. Now my mother is almost the reverse of all this. She was the daughter of a retired and wounded officer of the Royal Navy; was left an orphan in early life, and was educated in the same house with her cousin, Mr. John Bell, of Portington. She became pious in early life, and endured much persecution from her uncle with unflinching courage. She enjoyed the blessing of perfect love for many years, and when in health was eminent for activity and good works. She possesses a much higher range of talent

than my father—has more genius and less judgment—romantic in all her feelings, ardent in her attachments and resentments. She has ten times as much faith as my father. She has a keen, ready mind, but wants comparison and discrimination. She has a vehemency of impulse, and a strength and decision of will, and a power of faith which, if it had been united with a strong frame in the other sex, would have made her an eminent missionary. Now my father professes little, but feels a great deal; my mother feels deeply, and tells you of it too." He had a brother, Alfred, younger than himself by four years, and a sister, Mary Ann. Of them he also wrote, in order to complete the picture of the family: "Alfred is the finest youth I have ever met with—high in all his notions, lofty and liberal in his principles. Pride and ambition are his ruling passions. Of lion-like spirit, headstrong self-will, and a most vehement and overbearing temper, the world will see in him a second Brougham. And yet I know no one to whom you might commit yourself for candid judgment with greater confidence than our Alfred. Mary Ann, my beloved Mary Ann, is a most affectionate and amiable girl. I thought two years ago she would be a tame, passive character, but she is developing striking and spirited traits. She has more perseverance and judgment for her years than either Alfred or myself. I think she will not be behind either in intellect, and before both in prudence."

What is here said of his brother Alfred is not too strongly put. From the testimony of friends, and the proofs given in his letters, essays, and speeches, he must have been a youth of unusual promise. He early devoted himself to God, and became one of the most exemplary Christians. His tastes and convictions led him to choose the law for his profession. When this preference was expressed, the judicious father laid before him all the difficulties which would lie in his path: The long and expensive process of college and professional education; the still longer period which must elapse before he could reasonably

expect to get into practice; the want of patronage; the envy of the aristocracy, ever manifested to aspirants at the bar springing from the middle classes of society; and concluded by saying, "Remember, Alfred, if you insist on this course, the whole of your patrimonial fortune will be expended on your education;" to which Alfred fearlessly and magnanimously replied, "I care not when I enter the bar if I have not a shilling. I will make my own fortune, you may depend upon it." His facility of speech, readiness in debate, quickness of perception, wit—his striking person, and deep-toned and melodious voice—made him from boyhood "one of nature's orators." On one occasion, in the debating society of which he was a member, a gentleman of the bar from London chanced to hear him, and remarked afterward, "I would give my library, and all I am worth in the world, to have the amazing power of reply exhibited by that boy." He passed successfully through the course at Glasgow University, where he had the most capable of instructors, and listened on Sundays to such preachers as Chalmers and Wardlaw.

After his graduation from the University, he went up to London and entered a law-office. While engaged in his studies there, he became convinced of his duty to preach the Gospel. He determined to enter the ministry; and accordingly returned home, and began to apply himself unremittingly to a course of reading preparatory to admission into the Wesleyan Conference. His application was too close, his vigils too protracted; his health failed, and he speedily fell into a pulmonary consumption of which he died.

Mr. Cookman, the father, was one of the best representatives of the English middle class. By success in trade he rose to that degree of affluence which enabled him to live in a style of great comfort and quiet dignity; by his reputation for sound judgment and probity, he acquired the respect and confidence of his fellow-citizens, and was elected mayor of Hull, a position which he retained for many years; and by his earnest and con-

sistent devotion to the doctrines and usages of Wesleyan Methodism, he enjoyed the loyal affection of both the preachers and laymen of his denomination throughout his neighborhood. His good sense, genial piety, and generous hospitality made his house a centre of Methodist influence. In politics he sympathized with the more advanced men and measures of his times.

It is evident, however, that the mother, from the brief description already given, was the inspiration of the Cookman home. Her ardent temperament, vivid imagination, active faith, and courage, imparted to the sons the living spark which kindled in them a genius for speech and for the heroic in action. She was one of the women of gentle birth who became a Methodist when it was a reproach to be one; and, persecuted for her faith by her own family, she knew what it was to hold to convictions when it required the keenest suffering to do so. At the shrine of her self-denying piety was lighted the flame of the future missionary's zeal—a zeal which burned in him resistlessly till quenched in death. Thus we see that the parent stock from which the Cookmans of this and a former generation were derived was one combining in the father and the mother that happy union of qualities which usually gives rise in the offspring to distinguished powers and successes.

George Grimston, as the eldest born of his parents, very naturally received a large share of their attention. In an account of himself written in 1826, before entering the regular ministry, with a view to his own improvement, he records, "Never was a child more carefully instructed, more carefully watched over, or more earnestly exhorted by Christian parents to love and serve God than myself. And perhaps up to my eighth year the influence of these gracious instructions so far operated as to preserve me from the guilt of actual sin." At this time he was sent away to school; where, through evil associations, he was led astray and fell into some sinful habits. He was, however, at this early period the subject of keen convictions of conscience.

He lived with the fear that every night would be the end of the world. While the other boys of the school were sleeping quietly, he would be standing at the chamber window, "momentarily expecting the Judge to descend and the trumpet to blow." His views of sin and of personal guilt were not such as to lead to repentance. He was soon after removed to another school at a fashionable watering-place, where he began "a career of more decided sin and folly." At fourteen he returned home a different being, changed in principle and purpose—far astray from the simplicity with which at eight he had left the parental roof. His father took him promptly under his care, and through his guidance he imbibed a taste for books, and became a reader especially of history. He was put to business, kept diligently at work, but was encouraged to read in all his leisure hours. He became a member of a public library association, and formed, with several other intelligent young men, a debating club, thus finding in literary pursuits a wholesome diversion for his active nature, and also a means of stimulating and training his intellect. In contact with Grecian and Roman characters and institutions, he acquired the lofty notions of freedom and the rights of man which marked his subsequent career. Literature, though attractive, did not reform him; business was incapable of it: he gave the reins to passion, and plunged into the stream of worldliness.

When about eighteen years old he became a teacher in a Methodist Sunday-school. He was impelled by motives which he could not regard as genuine: "I approved of the design theoretically; besides, my parents being Methodists, I thought I should assist in their Sabbath-school; but I had no more knowledge or regard for the religious duty or responsibility of a teacher than the babe unborn." He was convicted of sin through the questioning of his scholars as to the meaning of God's Word. "I began seriously to think and reason about the matter in the following way: Why, I have come forward to instruct these

children, and I am ignorant myself. I, who talk to them about serving God, am serving the devil, and on the road to hell—yea, every boy in my class might turn round and say, 'Physician, heal thyself.'"

I can not give the story of his conversion more succinctly than he has done it: "These goadings and lashings of a condemning conscience made me miserable, and compelled me to a more close examination of my condition; and soon I saw that I was miserable and helpless, and blind and naked; that I stood obnoxious to God's holy law; was under the Almighty's curse, and each moment in danger of everlasting ruin. Still, however, I was rather convicted in judgment than broken in heart, and it is probable that these gracious impressions would have been overwhelmed by the strong bias of my mind to evil; but the good Lord added one or two other circumstances to aid and quicken the spiritual conviction. Just at that time I was disappointed in a particular friendship, which sickened and soured my mind to this world's enjoyments, and immediately upon this, the dearest friend I had in the world, after an illness of three days, died. This was the consummation of my misery; it seemed the final blow. I was tired of life, yet afraid to die; I was indulging in the world, yet sick of its pleasures; amid society, I was solitary; while within my own heart I carried the alarm-bell of a guilty conscience — in short, I hated life, I hated myself, I was miserable; this misery was not repentance; it was misanthropy, not contrition. And, indeed, so well convinced was I of this, that when the pious Methodists kindly invited me to partake of the blessings of Christian communion, I told them that I was totally unfit to be a member of their society, as I had not a desire to flee from the wrath to come. I had no soft compunctions on account of sin, no realization of guilt toward God; but the obdurate misery and wretchedness of a disappointed votary of pleasure. Thus I continued as miserable as I could be. Yet I did reform my outward

conduct; I did forsake my gay and frivolous companions; nay, more, I acted diligently as secretary in a large Sabbath-school, and endeavored, amid a multiplicity of business, to bury all knowledge and memory of myself. But this arose not from any clear sense of duty, or any love to God or men, but simply because I was sick and tired of the world; and, as I could not enjoy it, I forsook it. At length, however, the day-spring arose in my benighted soul; the light of grace showed me more perspicuously my real condition. I saw that I had lost the image of God—bore the image of the Evil One; that I was ignorant in understanding, corrupt and deceitful in heart, polluted in body, and desperately wicked in conduct. I saw that in my present state it was impossible I could be saved, for 'without holiness no man can see the Lord.' I saw clearly that I must be eternally lost; for already I was under sentence of death, and God was bound by his immutable word to punish all transgression.

"Under these gracious convictions, having fully resolved to seek salvation, to renounce the world, and to serve God, I joined the Methodist Society in February, 1820, and soon I found the blessings of Christian fellowship. Under the fatherly instruction and care of my excellent leader, light beamed brighter into my soul; I was called to see deeper into my own depravity, and finally I clearly apprehended that salvation was only to be obtained by faith in a crucified Redeemer. Nine months did I seek the blessing of justification earnestly and with many tears. Often in secret places, in garrets, in the open fields, or under hedges, I have poured forth my requests with strong cries, but still the day of liberty seemed at a distance, until I had well-nigh despaired. One Saturday night I had retired to rest under considerable condemnation for having indulged in an acrimonious spirit toward a near relative. I recollect, before I fell asleep, this passage gave me considerable trouble, 'Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath.' I awoke (I believe by the providence of God) about two o'clock in the morning, and my

misery and horror of mind were indescribable. All the weight of my sins seemed now bearing down upon my wretched soul, and ready to force me down to that bottomless pit which appeared just yawning; in this situation I cried mightily to God for deliverance and pardon, but the heavens were as brass to my prayers, and the storm of Almighty wrath increased apace. My agony of mind was now wrought up to its highest pitch, when suddenly I caught a glimpse of Christ on Calvary; then I cried with the desperation of a drowning man, 'Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief!' 'Lord, save or I perish!' 'Though Thou slay me, yet will I believe in Thee!' And suddenly there was a great calm—the storm was hushed—the burden was gone—and I felt that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven me all my sins. Being justified by faith, I had peace with God through my Lord Jesus Christ. It is true I had not that rapturous joy which some testify; but I had the peace which passeth all understanding. Oh! yes; the Spirit did bear witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. I lay me down, and sweetly fell asleep; and in the morning, when I awoke, I asked, Is this a dream? And I felt it was indeed a truth that I was justified freely through the blood of Christ."

The young believer now found a great difference in his experience, not only in the comfort which arose from a sense of acceptance with God, but also in the easy victory over sin which his spiritual renewal had bestowed. Nor was he content to rest in the experience of divine favor; he at once gave himself to religious work in various plans of benevolence, such as the Young Men's Visiting Society and the Juvenile Branch Missionary Society. Yearning for the salvation of souls, he began very soon to feel the desire "for a broader field of labor as a preacher of righteousness." His views of a call to the ministry were so positive as not to allow him to go forward hurriedly. "Indeed, so jealous was I of my own heart, and so severe in my notions upon this subject, that I was resolved, if this call

was not unanswerably given from God to my soul, I would forever remain silent."

In keeping with this purpose, not to run before he was called, Mr. Cookman kept steadily on his way, following closely the indications of Providence and of the Spirit as he could discern them. In 1821 he visited America on business for his father; and returning, was as deeply engrossed as any other young man of business, doing with diligence the duty which lay next to him. After a lapse of over two years I find him breathing the same devout and evangelical spirit, with a persuasion that God, amid severe trials and with great opportunities, was grounding him in the truth, and conforming his heart more and more to His own will. January 22, 1823, he writes: "I have been composing the skeleton of my first sermon from 1 Cor. ii., 2. Sunday fortnight I am to preach at St. Paul.* When I consider my unworthiness, I am ready to sink into the dust. Lord, prepare me." A week before preaching he asks, "Have I a clear call to preach the Gospel?" and upon examining himself by five tests, concludes "that a dispensation of grace is committed to me, and woe be to me if I preach not the Gospel." In addition to the usual tests which occurred to him, was the impression received while in America, and while on shipboard, that he must preach the Gospel, "and that too in America." He had gone to America for secular ends, but God had already decreed his return to America on a higher errand. His first pulpit efforts were well received. He preached quite regularly, and showed from the first the elements of power. The missionary ardor was kindling in his soul. His father proposed to establish him in business; but he wished to cut loose from all such entanglements, and enter himself forthwith at an American college for a course of preparation for the ministry. He yielded, however, to the dissuasions of his father and friends, who thought him already in the best possible school of prepa-

* Hull.

ration and in the path of duty. Without abandoning his purpose to preach, he waited upon God, resolving to do his duty, and leave consequences with God.

After a sermon preached at the Scott Street Chapel, he was greatly depressed. "I had entered the pulpit with a comfortable assurance of the divine favor, when, strange to tell, all upon a sudden my mind was beclouded; and, although I was perfectly master of the subject, I was yet bound in spirit." "I expected no one could profit; but, to my amazement, almost all expressed themselves as being much edified." He could not fail of a valuable lesson from this experience. Within a short time he made his first platform address, and achieved, in this maiden effort, that marked success which, so often repeated in after years, constituted him a prince among platform speakers. "When I ascended the platform my soul seemed weighed down with a sense of my unfitness. 'Oh! my God,' I could not help crying, 'why am I here? These poor heathen never trifled away privileges as I have done.' When my name was called from the chair, I was in this low state. I thought at first (owing to a violent hoarseness) that I should have to sit down, but just at this instant divine light broke in upon my soul, my voice cleared, my heart filled with holy love and fire, and I was enabled to speak with a force unknown before. The place was filled with the heavenly influence, and the loud, silvery, and hearty amens were affecting and cheering. Nothing afflicted me so much as the compliments of my friends. It seemed dishonoring God; because I am convinced He gave the power and sent the influence. The Lord shall have all the glory." It is not difficult for those who subsequently heard Mr. Cookman in this peculiar realm, at the zenith of his popularity, to imagine the utter wonder and pleasure which this beginning of surprises must have occasioned to those who were present.

The purpose of God with his young servant was now fast showing itself. The apple was well-nigh ripe, when it either would

fall of itself or could be easily plucked. Mr. Joshua Marsden strongly recommended him to offer himself to the American (Methodist) bishops, to take a circuit in the first instance; afterwards, if Providence opened the way, he could enter upon the missionary work. But he had engaged in business with his father for the term of three years, after which time he proposed to turn his attention more decidedly to the ministry, with the intention of going to America. His diary bears evidence at this period of the closest heart searchings; of the deepest and the most unaffected devotion to the service of Christ. The prayer is constantly on his lips, "What wilt Thou have me do?" There is no duty which he does not discharge, no self-sacrifice from which he shrinks: he is ready to do any work, to go, if need be, to the ends of the earth to preach the Gospel.

While his mind was particularly exercised in regard to an immediate entrance upon the ministry, he was appointed to drive Mr. Clough (one of the circuit preachers of Hull) to Partington. Mr. Clough impressed upon him the duty of present action, if he would not grieve the Holy Spirit; another young friend, and to his surprise the Rev. Mr. W. Entwistle, on whom he shortly after called, expressed the same view. Considerably agitated by such a concurrence of opinions, he laid the whole matter before his father, fully anticipating his decided negative for the present, when, to his great surprise, his father frankly told him that he had long been of the opinion that he was called to the ministry; and that, although his immediate departure might cause inconvenience, yet he would not throw one stumbling-block in his way, but rather further the ordinations of Providence by every prudent arrangement. As might have been anticipated, his mother fully coincided with this judgment, and "was perfectly willing to give him up to the Lord." Thus every obstacle to his full devotion to the ministry, and to his going to America as the field of its exercise, was removed, and his decision was accordingly made to emigrate at the earliest opportunity.

Happy in the decision which freed him from suspense, and introduced him into the definite course of his life, he was all aflame with zeal for the work which lay before him. "My peace flows as a river, and my heart exults to reflect that in a few months I may be permitted to preach Christ crucified to the poor blacks of Maryland." He could find no figures so adequate to express his ardor as that of the racer restless for the course, or the soldier in the battle eager for the conflict. This ardor, while it may not have been wholly void of the adventurous element which springs from the prospect of strange and hazardous enterprise, was nourished by the closest contact with the great heart of the Redeemer, and in the one simple purpose to save perishing men. He breathed constantly for entire deadness to the world and the spirit of true holiness, evidently regarding his mission as one of utter self-renunciation in the pursuit of the divine glory. "Although privations and persecutions or shipwreck may await me, I feel strong in the Lord, determined to obey His will at all hazards." Such a young man was fit to follow a Coke, an Asbury, and even a Paul, over the sea in the sublime work of bringing continents to God. "I must be a man of one work—dead to the world, and alive to Christ."

The 28th of March, 1825, was finally definitely fixed upon as the day of departure for America. The last days and hours were spent in preaching, visits, farewells, and preparations. The little brig *Orient* weighed anchor at the time appointed, and bore away westward with her devout and expectant passenger. The long voyage was not idle or irksome; the whole of its time was diligently consumed in close study and multifarious reading; in meditating and maturing plans of usefulness. He thoroughly digested such works as Bishop Watson's Apologies, Mason on Self-Knowledge, Jenyn's Views of the Internal Evidences of Christianity, Lord Lyttleton's Arguments for Christianity, Baxter's Gildas Salvianus and Saint's Rest, and Butler's

Analogy. He preached to the seamen as occasion offered, distributed tracts, and otherwise labored among them. What is most striking, however, was the constancy of his devotions, and the watchfulness he exercised over his own spirit. "I have been reflecting upon Baxter's warning of settling any where short of heaven, or reposing our souls to rest on any thing below God. Ah! how little do I think of this. This deceitful heart would fain set up its rest—not, indeed, in riches, honors, etc., but in creature love, a Gospel Church, gracious ordinances. This will not do. They are the means, not the rest itself. This is the ingenious device of Satan, by which we are seduced into a species of spiritual idolatry. Strive, O my soul, to consider thyself as a pilgrim in this wilderness, and rest in naught but God!"

Just before landing, retarded by calms, he took advantage of the smooth sea and quiet waiting to re-examine the motives which led him to America. "This is no womanish employ; this ministerial work is no fine theory of fancy. It requires all the firmness, courage, perseverance, zeal, faith of the veteran soldier. Therefore, I must fix my principles, and draw them from the fountain of all wisdom. I bless God my soul can calmly rejoice in the prospect, and yield all up to the will and direction of God." "Now, then, in the strength of the Lord, I will go forth to the Lord's work in this my adopted country." Would that more young men entering upon the divine apostleship could have an "Arabia" of three or more months, or even years, on shipboard or elsewhere such as he had!

On Sunday, May 16, 1825, the *Orient* sailed up the Delaware Bay and River. Mr. Cookman was sorry to fall short of reaching Philadelphia in time for the services of the sanctuary; but he had so drilled himself to make the best of circumstances, that he found compensation in secret communion with God and in thoughts of friends afar. He wrote to a friend: "This voyage has been profitable, both in an intellectual and spiritual

point of view. I have been grounding myself in the grand principles of the Gospel. * * * I have preached several times to this most wicked crew, and I have been blessed to the captain's good, who is resolved to turn over a new leaf. Patience has had its perfect work. * * * I have found it good to lay my will at the Redeemer's feet. * * * I have had painful views of the depravity of this corrupt heart, and this has stimulated me particularly to plead for the whole image and purity of Christ, so that the fire of divine love might devour all the grossness of sense and sin. * * * Here then we are on the Delaware. I regret that I can not assemble the crew and passengers for public worship, as the pilot keeps all the former in working the vessel up the river. I felt melancholy this morning in looking on shore and beholding nature in all its bloom, the sun careering in the firmament, and then thinking, 'Ah! the people of God are now repairing to His holy temple to worship at His feet.' Nevertheless, I retired to my little cabin, and the Lord visited the temple of my heart, and spoke graciously and comfortably to His poor servant. I have renewed my missionary covenant. I am the Lord's: the same great principles which called me forth remain with augmented force; I go wherever He commands."

CHAPTER II.

THE REV. GEORGE G. COOKMAN IN AMERICA.—THE BIRTH OF ALFRED.

MR. COOKMAN was cordially received by the Methodists of Philadelphia, among whom he lived and labored as a local preacher, in connection with St. George's Church, until the following spring. He was incessant in labors, not only in preaching as opportunity offered, but visiting the sick, the prisons, and hospitals. He also organized a class of young persons, which included among its members John McClintock, Charles Whitacre, and William and Leonard Gilder, all of whom subsequently became ministers of the Gospel. During a protracted sickness of Mr. William Barnes, the preacher in charge, he supplied the pulpit of St. George's.

At the session of the Philadelphia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1826, he was appointed to Kensington and St. John's churches, Philadelphia. Falling thus softly into the regular ministry did not suit either the design or the wishes of the young hero, whose soul was burning for his mission to the Africans. He had left England to convert the negroes, and it was not to his mind to become a pastor amid the ease and refinements of civilized life. He was patient, however, and sought constantly, in the utmost self-denial, the guidance of God's Spirit and of His Church. On his twenty-sixth birthday he expressed himself thus: "It was the voice of the Spirit which first called my attention to Africa. I have from a child commiserated the injured negro; and for years prior to this my missionary feelings sympathized with them in common with the heathen world. Under the workings of the Spirit on this

subject, I came to the conclusion to offer myself as a missionary to the African colony at Mesurado. The conviction I strove against for some time, until the conflict became overwhelmingly painful and distressing. In this situation I called upon Mr. Bacon, one of the first agents to the colony, who informed me that there was a loud call for a Methodist missionary, and that the field was white unto the harvest. After solemn prayer to God, I believed, according to the light given, it was my duty to go to Bishop George, and lay the matter before him, state my convictions, views, and feelings. When this resolution was once formed, I felt instant inward peace. I went to New York and had an interview with Bishop George, when he stated that he had often wished we had an African missionary, and approved of the design; at the same time, he advised me to take no definitive step until the close of the year. * * * Upon a fair statement of the case, it appears my way is not clearly opened to the African field. And as the practical decision is connected with such deep responsibility, it would not be advisable to move until the way be very clear. Bishop George thinks it appears probable that in the ensuing Conference year a very extensive field of missionary labor may be opened among the blacks on this side of the water, more so than could possibly be obtained in Africa. The agent is clearly of the opinion that a white missionary can benefit the general cause most efficiently by his labors here—at least for the present. I feel my mind much at rest; I have done all that appeared to be my duty; I have endeavored to follow the leadings of Providence, for I have good cause to watch over and be jealous of my own spirit. If no other result flow from this than bringing my views before the mind of the bishop, perhaps a point of no inconsiderable importance is gained to the great cause. The heart of the benevolent old man seems warmed with love divine to the poor Africans." Immediately in this connection, he adds, "I had a good day, particularly in bear-

ing a decided testimony for the glorious doctrine of Christian perfection. Oh! my God, hasten the period when sin shall expire and grace shall reign. In visiting the sick, I have found assistance and power, but yet the habit of my mind is not sufficiently spiritual. Let me plead and strive for a pure intention, a sanctified affection, and a holy walk. O Lord, help me to remember that for myself, as a follower of Christ, as well as a messenger of God, I must answer."

The persistence with which Mr. Cookman adhered to the original purpose he had in coming to America is truly admirable, as not only showing the depth of the conviction, but also the integrity of his heart and the force of his will. His preaching and speaking in Philadelphia had produced a strong impression, and his fame as an orator began already to be acknowledged. His ministrations were universally acceptable, and very much sought. There was a demand in the churches for eloquent preachers; and the brilliant career of Summerfield had prepared the people to appreciate thoroughly a young Englishman who promised in any degree to take the place of that seraphic man. It must have required in Cookman just such close heart searchings and earnest prayers as his memoranda reveal to keep him firm to Africa. It is not without significance that he yearned for deadness to the world and for increased spirituality. The record in regard to Christian perfection in this relation is truly valuable, as showing its vital relation to missionary work, and equally so as exhibiting in the father thus early in his ministry the fast hold he had taken of that doctrine of Methodism which was subsequently to become the distinguishing feature of the life and ministry of his son.

While actively devoting himself to regular ministerial duty, Mr. Cookman's efforts in the direction of Africa were not relinquished. "Some time ago I made an offer of myself to the Colonization Society to go out to Liberia as a Methodist missionary at my own expense. I am sorry to find that an extract

from my letter has been published in several of the papers, inasmuch as I could have wished to go about the matter without noise and pomp of observation. * * * I feel resigned to do or to suffer what the Lord may appoint — if He say go, I am ready; if He say remain, I will remain and be submissive. I feel the kindlings of God's love, and am looking for a deeper and a holier baptism."

His cherished desire, however, was doomed to disappointment. God had other work for him to do. As the sequel proved, instead of going as a missionary to convert the heathen —possibly to leave his bones after a few months on the sands of Africa—he was, by his advanced ideas and persuasive eloquence, to plant the seeds of missionary labors which were destined to spring up in ever-widening harvests to the end of time. Methodist missions were just then starting, and they needed in their first feeble beginnings such a heroic, fiery advocate as this brilliant and devout young man. He was not to be a missionary, as he earnestly and sincerely intended, pure and simple; but he was to be a creator of missionaries, who, in unbroken succession, should go from the American continent to all parts of the world. He was here, too, to found a family which was subsequently to be identified in all movements adapted to advance the salvation of the race; and, in the apostolic zeal of noble sons, was to project his influence into the far-reaching future of his adopted country. The Almighty concealed from His servant at the time His full design, as he had done from many of His chosen ones before; but go to Africa he could not. His way was blocked. As was natural, the defeat of a purpose so long fixed upon, and which had wrought in him as an all-absorbing and assimilating force, could not but cause a painful disappointment. He did not hesitate to own it.

On November 6th he wrote: "Abraham went forth at the command of Jehovah, 'not knowing whither he went,' and Luther, Wesley, Coke, Asbury, were first thrust out, and led along

by a path which they could not have imagined. Had it, for instance, been told Wesley when he was in Oxford at my age, that he should be the head of a large body of Christians; that he should approve and employ lay preachers, and stand up in the market-places and preach the Gospel without book, he would have thought the teller mad. And it has appeared to me, after impartial investigation of Church history, that the real, extensive revivals of vital godliness in every age have not been by preconcerted design on the part of the instruments, but by a series of causes unsuspected and uncontrolled by human agency, but directed by Him who has ascended on high and received gifts for men. It is a series of reflections like these which reconcile me to my present situation and circumstances. I had certainly resolved to go to Africa, so far as any volition of the human will can decide upon any question; and I confess with shame that when, from the statement of the agent of the Colonization Society and the advice of Bishop George, my way seemed blocked up, my heart rose in rebellion, as though the great purpose of my soul was frustrated. But the great question now is, Was the purpose of the Lord frustrated? Is it not rather in progress of fulfillment? For if one part of our purpose be the preparation of instruments, then such a disappointment to my proud self-will may be the best preparation in convincing me of my imperfect judgment and frailty of purpose."

With such reflections as these, Mr. Cookman reconciled himself to what was now evidently the final subversion of his early plan, and his permanent settlement in America as an itinerant Methodist preacher. With a jealous watchfulness over his heart, he did not fail to see in the thwarting of his scheme the deep need he had of thorough proving in his religious experience, and of much correction in his natural tendencies. He knew himself too well not to know that impulsiveness was a defect in his character. "The thought and the action are with me nearly synonymous, and when a thing is designed, my bones

ache within me and my flesh cries out till it is done. I am aware this is a defect, leading me to speak too fast and to act too fast. It was this very thing which plunged Dr. Coke into so many perplexities, and gave Wesley such an advantage over him as a character. I always need a sober counselor at my elbow to talk the matter twice over."

Thus did he carefully guard himself, seeing in his worst disappointments the providential means of perfecting his graces, and using the things which he suffered as the things he most needed. Whether justly or not, it is common for God's most conscientious servants to think they discern weakness where often lies their greatest strength. It was the ardent temperament inherited from the mother which was the real spring of Mr. Cookman's mental power; nor would it have done too far to restrain it. Ordinarily, the great instruments of Providence have rough and sharp points, and are not toned down to exceeding smoothness.

In February, 1827, Mr. Cookman returned to England on a brief visit. He was married to Miss Mary Barton, Doncaster, Yorkshire, on the 2d of April, 1827, and immediately left with his bride for America. Miss Barton was a young lady of excellent family, of superior personal endowments, and of exemplary piety. In marrying Mr. Cookman, she not only wedded him as her husband, but also as God's minister, and devoted herself, with the utmost simplicity and in entire sympathy with him, to the work which absorbed his soul and was to employ his life. The comforts and luxuries of an affluent English home were abandoned with the pure intent of becoming a true helpmeet to the man of her heart, the accredited ambassador of Christ in bringing the world a conquest to redeeming love. Mrs. Cookman still lives at an advanced age, a witness to the power of the same self-sacrificing zeal with which she originally left her father's house.

In the spring of 1827 Mr. Cookman was appointed to the

Lancaster Circuit. This charge embraced Lancaster, Columbia, and Reading, three of the most important towns in Pennsylvania. It was a large and laborious charge, being what was called a six weeks' circuit, in the arrangement of which he preached at each church in the circuit but once in six weeks. His residence was at Columbia, situated on the Susquehanna River.

Here Alfred was born, January 4, 1828. He was physically a healthful and remarkably well-proportioned child. The mother, as she clasped her first-born to her heart, felt mingling with her maternal and wifely joy a sense of disappointment in the probable curtailment of her active participation in the pastoral work of her husband, and further postponing, if not entirely defeating, the missionary purpose which still possessed both husband and wife. She had come to America with great designs in her soul; and now that the mission of a mother opened distinctly before her, the enthusiasm of her spirit was not a little sobered. Tending a babe in the narrow confines of the nursery, did not quite comport with that brilliant apostolic career which she had marked out for herself as the companion of a Christian missionary. But God gave her a happy thought. "Alfred was to be her Solomon to build the temple which she in becoming a mother could not rear." She was reconciled to her calling, and henceforth gave herself to the training of this son as the main work of her life. With the persuasion that he was given to her of God, she consecrated him from birth to the sacred ministry, to be a builder of God's Temple. All her thoughts, feelings, and plans for the child grouped about this central idea, and the idea in turn stamped its character and complexion on all she did.

There were two classes of women whom the Romans loved to honor—the few virgins who devoted themselves in perpetual virginity to keeping alive the vestal fires, and the mothers of heroes. Mrs. Cookman accepted the traditional Anglo-Saxon doctrine that there is, strictly speaking, no higher mission for

woman than the function of a matron. She had talents and graces which would have made her useful and famous in any sphere; but she saw with womanly instinct and true maternal feeling that her greatest usefulness and utmost fame—as far as she could consider fame—would be found in losing herself in her son, in spending her time and energies upon him, in fashioning the man who was to stand a man among men. Surely to train men—to offer to sons the care, instruction, and sympathy which they need, and to maintain over them a controlling influence through the successive periods of their development—is the worthiest ambition which can fill a woman's heart. Such was Mrs. Cookman's ambition. The sequel confirms the wisdom of her choice. She was a true companion of her husband, and as far as practicable aided him not only by her affectionate sympathies and judicious counsels in his ministry, but also did all she could privately and publicly, as a godly lady, to promote the work of religion; but pre-eminently her realm was her house, and her work rather to form preachers than to preach. Mr. Cookman's duties on his circuit kept him much from home, and threw the young wife and mother upon her own resources. This could not be otherwise than a trial to her refined nature, but she found comfort in the companionship of her child, and in the constantly augmenting success and fame of her husband. He was universally popular. At Reading, where there was then no Methodist church, he preached in the court-house to crowds, in which were to be regularly seen the foremost lawyers and men of business in the town.

I give here an extract from a letter received about this time from the father of Mr. Cookman, in which touching reference is made to the two Alfreds:

"HULL, February 11, 1828.

"DEAR GEORGE AND MARY,—Our last letters sent by vessel from this port would bring the mournful intelligence of the loss of our dearest Alfred, with many particulars respecting his last moments and his tranquil exit. These events, when brought back to our recollection, form new associations

and open afresh the wounds in our bleeding hearts. We trust, however, you will be supported by the good hand of God under this irreparable loss, by the full assurance that now he is released from all his suffering, and his happy spirit is admitted into the presence of his Redeemer, and is associated with the spirits of just men made perfect. This assurance should moderate our sorrows; and, though we can not but feel as his near relatives, our Christian principles should check an excess of suffering, because we are assured it was the good pleasure of God to take him from us, and he is much happier, better provided for, and taken greater care of now by his Heavenly Father than he possibly could have been by us. * * *

"On the receipt of your last, bearing date the 7th of January, our feelings were deeply interested in receiving the pleasing intelligence of the birth of your son, and we were delighted to find the name of Alfred should not become extinct in our family. May he exhibit a large share of his uncle's intellectual and moral character, and may his mental powers in due time become as vigorous and his person as likely to be robust. * * * May you receive him as the gift of God, and while you gratefully acknowledge His supporting and sustaining hand, may you and the child be entirely consecrated to Him."

Was ever prayer more prediction? The desire of the grandfather for his second Alfred was entirely fulfilled, and in nothing more than his entire consecration to God. Who can compute the value to children of the faith of such parents and grandparents—a faith which connects them in their very infancy with the covenant that engages God to bestow special blessings upon the children of His people?

In the spring of 1828, Mr. Cookman was stationed at New Brunswick, N. J., which was then comprised, with all the State of New Jersey, in the Philadelphia Conference. While stationed here he made one of his earliest platform addresses, which immediately established his reputation with the community outside of his own denomination as a first-class orator. A correspondent of the *New York Observer*, who was present on the occasion, wrote of that speech subsequent to Mr. Cookman's death: "None who were present will forget the powerful impression made by him at a meeting of the Young Men's Bible Society, in New Brunswick, N. J., in the year 1828, when a

Methodist preacher of small stature, almost unknown in the community, having been invited for denomination's sake to speak on the occasion, arose and electrified the audience with an address that suddenly bore away the palm from all competitors. It reminded one of the brilliant *début* of Summerfield at the anniversary of the American Bible Society in New York. None could appreciate the force of that speech who was unacquainted with the charm of the speaker's manner. Besides the simplicity, vivacity, and variety of the address, there was an *appropriateness*, both in point of time and place, that secured the undissembled admiration of his enlightened audience.

"His subject was Christian union combined with denominational action. His mind, rich in bold and natural metaphors, drew a sketch more impressive than the most profound and elaborate argumentation could be, especially when addressed to a popular assembly of various creeds. He undertook to marshal the spiritual army. He considered the Methodists as the mounted volunteers, hovering on the frontiers; the Presbyterians, 'who love an open field,' as the infantry, occupying the centre in solid columns, and presenting to the enemy a series of impregnable squares; he stationed the Baptists along the rivers and lakes, to win laurels in their peculiar warfare; and Episcopalians were to man the garrisons, inspect the magazines, and direct the batteries. 'But who shall be our artillery men? I propose, sir,' said Mr. Cookman, 'that we commit this very important department to our brethren of the Dutch Reformed Church; and, sir, may they acquit themselves with a valor worthy of their ancestors when the proud flag of De Witt swept the sea and the thunder of Van Tromp shook the ocean!' He then warned them of a spy in the camp, 'old and gray in iniquity, toothless, crooked, and unsavory;' and proceeded to draw a most graphic picture of Bigotry. He hoped that if the Methodist cavalry caught sight of him they would ride him down; that the Presbyterians would bayonet him; the Baptists drown him;

the Episcopalians, if he approached their garrison, open a double-flanked battery upon him, and the Dutch Reformed greet him with a round of artillery. 'Let him,' said he, 'die the death of a spy, without military honors, and, after he has been gibbeted for a season, let his body be given to the Quakers, and let them bury him deep and in silence. May God grant his miserable ghost may never revisit this world of trouble!'"

It is easy to imagine, as this brief sketch is read, the well-nigh overwhelming effect which this speech from a comparative stranger and a rather unpromising young man must have had upon the audience. Such a picture was a creation worthy the genius of a Bunyan. The ability to sustain a series of comparisons at such length, reaching the requirements of allegory, with so much of genuine truthfulness and humor, showed in the young preacher a high artistic power.

In 1829 Mr. Cookman was appointed to Talbot Circuit, Talbot County, Maryland. He had dreamed over in England of one day preaching the Gospel to the blacks of Maryland, and now his opportunity had come. By long brooding over the sufferings of the poor negroes, he had transferred their chains to himself, and he longed to be among them and to do what he could to ameliorate their condition. His circuit extended through the whole county, and included both the white and colored population adhering to the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was cordially received by the warm-hearted Southerners, among whom he found many English traits which did not fail to make him feel at home, and did much to relieve the pain which the presence of slavery caused him. Mr. Cookman never found closer friends than among the devout people of this section. Methodism had taken early and strong hold upon the community, and embraced, with slight exceptions, the staple intelligence and enterprise of the whole region; the people lived in simple affluence, and were ever ready to lavish upon their

preacher all the choicest gifts of air, land, and water. They received Mr. Cookman, his wife and children—for by this time Alfred had a brother—with the warmest hospitality. One gentleman, Mr. Samuel Harrison, who owned a large plantation stretching in a narrow neck out into the Chesapeake Bay, took them to his own house. The minister's coming to each successive appointment every four weeks was an ovation—the whole country, whites and blacks alike, turned out to hear him. And it was not because the people had not been used hitherto to good preaching—they had had it from the beginning of their religious history; they therefore knew how to appreciate it in Mr. Cookman.

The celebrated colored orator, Frederick Douglass, in his book entitled "My Bondage and my Freedom," p. 198, tells us that the Rev. George Cookman took an interest in the temporal and spiritual welfare of the slaves. He writes: "Our souls and our bodies were alike sacred in his sight; and he really had a good deal of genuine anti-slavery feeling mingled with his colonization ideas. There was not a slave in our neighborhood that did not love and venerate Mr. Cookman. It was pretty generally believed that he had been chiefly instrumental in bringing one of the largest slaveholders—Mr. Samuel Harrison—to emancipate all his slaves; and, indeed, the general impression was that Mr. Cookman had labored faithfully with slaveholders, whenever he met them, to induce them to emancipate their bondmen, and that he did this as a religious duty. When this good man was at our house, we were all sure to be called in to prayers in the morning; and he was not slow in making inquiries as to the state of our minds, nor in giving us a word of exhortation and encouragement. Great was the sorrow of all the slaves when this faithful preacher of the Gospel was removed from the circuit."

Mr. Cookman's custom was to hold special services apart for the colored people, to which they flocked in great numbers.

He was regarded with increasing favor both by masters and servants.

But what, meanwhile, is our little Alfred doing? Playing often, no doubt—as many others before and since who became good and great have done—with the little negroes near the "quarters," or in front of the "big house," or on the sandy beach, or chasing butterflies over the fields, or possibly at "holding meeting." His mother says of him at this very early age: "The tone of his mind had always a religious tendency, and before he was four years of age he imitated all the services of the Church. He would sometimes collect a crowd of colored children around him, and in his childish way preach to them about the necessity of being good, and then they would go to heaven and live with Jesus; but if they were bad boys and girls they would go to hell, and be burnt in a great hot fire. His father traveled a circuit on the eastern shore of Maryland about this time, which brought Alfred in contact with numberless opportunities to show the bias of his mind. He would ask for a bowl of water, and request the servants of the family to come and be baptized. Many of them would come and kneel down as devoutly as though they felt the reality of the ordinance; and he, taking the water in his hand, would say, 'Bob Trot, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. God bless you, and make you a good man.' Then Bob and others who went through the same process would rise up from their knees and go forth as though they had performed a religious duty. So Alfred would go through with all the services of the sanctuary in his boyish way with as much gravity and decorum as though he were already ordained, or set aside for this special work—directing men and women to be good and do good."

It is not uncommon for boys, who never become preachers or much of any thing—for children are busy little artists, painting with the brush of sympathy on the canvas of their souls

the real life which passes before them—to do just what Alfred did; and yet there is that in the ways of every child which shows the natural bent, and to some degree forecasts the after life. Goethe's painful sensitiveness to the presence of ugliness or deformity while quite a baby was indicative of that fine, delicate organization which is the constitutional basis of the poet. His mother had the eye to see it, and with skillful hand she guided the divine instinct by bringing to its nurture agreeable objects, and gently inciting it with narratives of the wondrous and beautiful; otherwise Germany had not had her greatest poet, nor the world one of its greatest educators. To every mother her child has an individuality, and she can discern in it the hidden germ which in the flower is to render its maturity distinct and beautiful. The difference in mothers is the power properly to direct this original faculty. Fewer children would perish in the promise if there were more mothers who knew how to cherish and train the natural and gracious endowment. Mrs. Cookman had one desire for her boy, and she sedulously watched every hint in his childhood which pointed in the direction of its fulfillment. She hailed every such indication as a precursor of his future, since it had been impressed on her mind from his birth that he was to do the work that was in her heart to do for the Lord. But she was a wise mother, looking for results, however good and desirable, to follow only upon the use of the proper means. She did not expect devout wishes and devout prayers to mould the character of Alfred without corresponding effort to rear him aright. Great and good men do not grow, like the rank weeds, untended, but, like the lovely and fragrant flowers, by culture. Here's a memorandum from the mother on this point: "Alfred was very correct in all his deportment, obedient to his parents, very truthful, and conscientious. He was, of course, watched over with more than ordinary care. Parental vigilance was ever on the alert to detect and correct any thing that might mar the little

tender plant." Yet there was not excess of training, nor morbid stimulating. "His father early impressed him with the idea, 'Play when you play, and work when you work.'"

It was hardly to be expected that the social scenes by which this child was surrounded at that period could permanently affect his disposition; yet he ever after loved this country and its people, and to this day there is no name fuller of sweet odor in the whole region than that of Alfred Cookman. It is well known, too, that he cherished throughout life a great love for the black race. He had romped, wept, and laughed—nay, even prayed, with the colored boys; and a common feeling, so self-asserting in children, had taught him in the simple and innocent sports of childhood the great truth of the oneness of humanity. In the very lap of the warm, unselfish nursing of which the negro woman is capable, associated with the strange and weird stories, and the low, soft melodies, the earnest and implicit trustfulness with which she mingles all her work, he received impressions at this susceptible age which ever endeared the colored people to him.

CHAPTER III.

THE GROWING FAME OF REV. GEORGE G. COOKMAN.—THE CHILDHOOD OF ALFRED.

How far Mr. Cookman felt himself successful in his mission to the colored people does not appear. He found obstacles in promoting their liberation. He was useful to them, as he was also to the white population; but his talents were soon in demand in the great city, and he was accordingly at his next appointment assigned to St. George's, Philadelphia. It showed the confidence of the bishop, and of the people of St. George's, that he was sent so soon to the charge where on his first arrival he had joined and labored as a local preacher. On the removal of the family to the city, Alfred, with his brother George, was placed at school under the care of Miss Ann Thomas, a member of the Society of Friends, who was quite celebrated for her skill in teaching. He remained two years under her care, and made rapid progress in the elementary branches of education. She took very special interest both in him and his little brother, and expressed great sorrow when they left her. In a note to the mother she wrote: "I give my testimony respecting thy dear boys that I have enjoyed great consolation in their company. While endeavoring to inform their little minds, and give them a knowledge of literature, they have been obedient and attentive, very innocent, and strict to truth, and in almost every thing what my heart could wish. Tell them to remember Miss Ann, who dearly loves them, and wishes them everlasting happiness."

I presume Alfred, at the age of five to seven, did not get very deep into what his loving teacher calls "literature." His

instruction in the rudiments of knowledge was probably thorough, and imparted with the exactness and kindliness for which the Friends are remarkable. This godly lady's spirit undoubtedly affected him as much as the lessons she taught, and may in some measure account for the great favor in which he always held her people—a favor which was as warmly reciprocated by them.

Subsequently to the two years at St. George's, Philadelphia, Mr. Cookman spent one year at Newark, N. J. His reputation had reached Baltimore, Md., then and now a stronghold of Methodism in America. The intercourse of the citizens of the eastern shore of Maryland with their commercial metropolis could not fail to bring to the attention of the leading Methodists of the city the brilliant talents of the preacher. Mr. Cookman had himself visited Baltimore, and preached in its churches. There arose an urgent demand for his services, and he was accordingly transferred to the Baltimore Conference in the spring of 1834, and appointed to the city station, which then included all the Methodist Episcopal churches of the city except those on Fell's Point. Mr. Cookman was associated with Reverends William Hamilton, James Sewell, Thomas Thornton, and James H. Brown, and preached in rotation with them on the circuit plan. His ministrations excited the utmost enthusiasm, and crowds filled the churches to hear him. His eloquent preaching and platform addresses, faithful pastoral labors, devotion to Sunday-schools, and magical social powers—baptized as all his faculties and exercises were by the Holy Ghost—gave him a position which has seldom been equaled and never excelled by any pastor in that city. His influence helped to sustain the position Methodism had already acquired; and greatly assisted to push it forward to the pre-eminence which it has ever since held. The Methodists of that day who still survive scattered among the several churches never weary of talking of his power, and remember and narrate with dis-

tinctness, special passages in his sermons and speeches which thrilled the congregations.

On one Sabbath evening, Mr. Cookman was preaching to a dense audience at Light Street, and, as sometimes happened with him, and happens to all men, however able, if they are extemporaneous speakers, he had no freedom in his sermon, and evidently did not succeed as he wished; but, with a fertility of resource which seldom failed him, he began an exhortation as he proceeded to the consciences of his hearers, which was so effective for direct and fiery appeal as to subdue all hearts. A prominent citizen, who had been attracted by his fame, but was about to leave the house disappointed at his sermon, was so wrought upon by the exhortation as to be awakened and converted.

Among the vast multitudes who hung upon the eloquent lips of Mr. Cookman at this time was a little boy of seven years of age, not unknown to him. Alfred was no indifferent hearer to such life-like expositions and delineations as the father gave from Sunday to Sunday. The intelligence of the lad had sufficiently dawned to appreciate a method of teaching which was so well suited to awaken and chain the attention of the young. His conscience was growing with his other faculties, and now began to assert itself. The seeds of truth cast into the soil of his heart were beginning to swell, though the full time for them to burst into a definitive new life had not yet come. Referring to his early experience, he has himself recorded: "I shall never cease to be grateful for the instruction and example of a faithful father and an affectionate mother. At this moment I can not call up a period in my life, even in my earliest childhood, when I had not the fear of God before my eyes. When about seven years of age, I persuaded my parents to let me attend a Watch-Night service. It was held in Old Exeter Street Church, in the city of Baltimore. My father preached on the second coming of Christ. Thinking that perhaps the

end of the world was just at hand, I realized for the first time my unpreparedness for the trying scenes of the judgment, and trembled in the prospect. I date my awakenings from that time."

With many of the families of his charge in Baltimore Mr. Cookman formed close intimacies, and with none more so than the family of the late Mr. Joshua Creamer. I extract the following incident, written by him in these happy days in the album of Mrs. Jane Creamer Taylor, then an unmarried daughter at home. It is beautiful in itself, and indicative of the devout and humble spirit which animated his ministry:

"It was on a fine Sabbath evening in the month of June, 1821, that three youthful pilgrims visited the tomb of Wesley's father in Epworth churchyard. They gathered from the overhanging beech-tree a little bark as a memento of the past; and, while standing on that very tombstone from which John Wesley had preached to listening thousands eighty years before, they solemnly invoked a blessing from the God of the Church, and determined to follow Wesley as he followed Christ. One of these youths is now a missionary in Upper Canada, the second is a useful preacher of the Gospel in England, and the third the writer of this short article.

"'Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.'

"GEORGE G. COOKMAN.

"Baltimore, 9th of February, 1835."

Another leaf from this album will appear in its place, illustrative of the reverence and affection which was even then springing up in the son's heart for the father.

The time had now come when Alfred's academic training was fairly to begin. Since leaving the charge of the gentle Friend in Philadelphia, he had been mainly dependent upon home instruction; but now, in the providence of God, he was to be placed in the most favorable circumstances for a boy's education. Mr. Cookman, for reasons which were sufficient to the authorities of the Church, was removed in 1836 from Baltimore City to the town of Carlisle, Pa. At first glance, such an exercise of episcopal supervision might appear unaccounta-

ble—certainly without justification. To remove a man so well adapted to mould great masses from the centre of population and power, when his usefulness was constantly augmenting, to a quiet, rural town, where he could at most have only a limited community to influence, might seem at once strange and unreasonable. But the highest wisdom teaches that influence is not always to be measured by the number of minds which it reaches, but by the quality of the minds, and the degree with which it affects them. As in matter, so in mind, a given force may effect greater results by being exerted on a small spot than by being spread over a wide surface. It is one of the economies of Nature to gather up and concentrate her energies for the production of her most remarkable works.

There was reason enough for Mr. Cookman's removal to Carlisle. The Methodists of the Baltimore and Philadelphia Conferences had recently purchased from the Presbyterians Dickinson College, located at that borough, and had made it their educational centre. Once more, from the despair which was engendered by the ashes of Cokesbury and Light Lane, they had risen in hope, with a determined effort to found for their region an institution for the liberal training of young men. They had looked abroad through the Church, and had concentrated upon their new enterprise the best talents which Methodism could then afford, and from the West, East, and their own borders, had brought together Durbin, Caldwell, Emory, Allen, McClintock, and Roszell, all young men, instinct with literary enthusiasm, with denominational and professional pride. The selection of Carlisle as a location for the school may have been a mistake, but the choice of the Faculty was one of those rare successes which can only be explained by a guiding spirit in the Church. The Rev. J. P. Durbin had recently come from the West, with a high reputation for pulpit ability and administrative skill, and was put at the head of its management; Professor Merrit Caldwell, fresh from the walls of Bowdoin, brought

with him accurate scholarship and valued experience as a teacher; Professor W. H. Allen, also from Bowdoin, united rare physical and intellectual strength, which was disciplined and enriched alike by manual and mental toil; the youthful Professor Robert Emory had carried off the prizes at Columbia, New York City, and was probably one of the purest and most thoroughly furnished young men of the land; Professor John McClintock graduated from the Pennsylvania University in his teens, and was already regarded by all who knew him as a prodigy for the grasp and versatility of his talents and the fullness of his attainments; Mr. S. A. Roszell, from the halls of the first Methodist College of the West, at Augusta, Ky., was of a parent stock justly famed for its vigor, and possessed in his own right a reputation for depth and finish of culture.

There was never a happier combination in the grouping of men, who were destined very speedily to crystallize into a harmonious unity. They blended at once—thinking, feeling, working freely, with the most implicit interchange of principle, plan, and aim; and their joint labors began to tell in the college and at the remotest points of its patronizing territory. Methodist youths from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia, began to gather within its halls. These youths needed not only literary instruction, but also the ablest moral and spiritual care of which the Church was capable. The Conferences and the Faculty pledged themselves to the parents that the religion and morals of their sons should not suffer while under college oversight; and hence it was deemed reasonable that the ministry had no man whose powers were too great for Carlisle, or whose eloquence and piety could be more usefully employed than in inspiring and moulding young men for the future of the Church and the nation.

Mr. Cookman was accordingly sent to take the charge of the Church, composed of both town and college people. He was still a young man, in all the glow of youthful zeal, in the full

force of rapidly culminating talents, and with all the earnestness of an absorbing devotion to the single work of a Christian pastor. His task as a preacher was a most difficult and delicate one—to stand before a congregation constituted as congregations are in a college town. He must satisfy professors, entertain students, and edify tradespeople. Could any position require more genuine ability? There was Durbin before him—a natural Tecumseh in the pulpit, then in his prime, whose words from the same desk were not seldom like alternate ice and fire bolts crashing through the consciences of the hearers—there was Emory, exact, logical, and forcible—and McClintock, in the first flush of a round, graceful, and persuasive oratory. There too were the fastidious, hypercritical collegians of all classes, the hardest hearers; and, not least, the matter-of-fact outside business community; but the pastor was master of the situation, nothing appalled him; his commission was from God, and he faithfully fulfilled it. His influence over all classes was unique and perfect. In the pulpit, the parlor, the prayer-meeting, he was the acknowledged leader, and never was a ministry under like circumstances more productive of good. His trophies for the Cross were gathered from all these circles; young men were then and there converted through his preaching who have since become honored in all the walks of life.

But I must not forget our boy of nine summers, whose eyes opened upon these scenes in which his worthy father was so distinguished an actor. He also had come to college; and he equally, but in a different sense, was to be the companion of these classic men and their surroundings. Under such circumstances, in this focus of knowledge and piety, an impulse was to be imparted to him which was to determine his whole after-life. I know of few spots upon which Alfred could have fallen at this impressible age more suitable in all its adjuncts for his first formal entrance into school. Of the people about him, to whose constant association the office and personal worth of his father

would naturally introduce him, I have spoken; but of the place itself and its environs much can be said. Carlisle has but little attractiveness in its immediate topography or in its artificial structure—a plain town, its only importance is as the civil and natural centre of a thrifty agricultural county, without any objects of taste whatever; the outlying country is very beautiful. The Cumberland Valley, in which it lies, is broad and undulating, abounding in springs and streams; its soil rich and productive, its whole bosom covered with fertile farms or luxuriant forests; while in the distance on either side the North and South Mountains, spurs of the Alleghanies, rise into prominence and sweep along in unbroken succession, save here and there a gentle gap, and form, in their continuous, wavy outlines, one of the most agreeable prospects which can be offered to the eye. I doubt if old Carlisle, in England, after which it is named, possesses a more charming situation.

It can not be supposed that this physical beauty was without educational effect upon the ardent temperament of the boy, inclined as he was by his healthful nature to relish all sensuous delights. Indeed, the æsthetical sense born in him, and afterward so strongly marked in his intellectual development, and the devout reverence for God in works of nature always so prominent through his whole life, must have received from it an exciting and durable effect. A lad so reflective as he is represented from the very dawn of thought could not have been otherwise than most favorably influenced by habitual contact with scenes so simple and pleasing.

> "Not seldom from the uproar I retired
> Into a silent bay, or sportively
> Glanced sideway, leaving the tumultuous throng,"

might doubtless be said of him at this as well as later periods of his youth, and that not so much to elude his companions in play, as to gain for himself the quiet communion for which his thoughtful soul thirsted.

But enough of my fancy and a little of fact from Alfred's own hand. Fortunately one of his earliest letters has been preserved, and lies before me in his own handwriting. The composition must be regarded as creditable for a boy of ten years; not surprising, however, when the exercises he was then having in school and the constant care his mother gave him are taken into account. The penmanship already shows the indications of the beautiful chirography for which his later manuscripts are noted. It is to his grandfather Cookman:

"CARLISLE, January 27, 1838.

"MY DEAR GRANDFATHER,—I have long been thinking that it was my duty to write a letter to one for whom I desire to cherish the warmest affection, and to whom we are already under very great obligations. * * *

"First of all I must congratulate you on your very honorable election to the high office of mayor to the important and flourishing town of Kingston-upon-Hull. Although we boys are Americans and Republicans in our feelings, yet we are not insensible to the honor attached to offices conferred by the votes of the people. * * *

"I am very happy to say that dear mother's health continues very good. Fortunately for her, the winter up to this time has been unusually mild; indeed, the last week has rather resembled the month of April than January, so that she has been able to go out three or four times a week in the middle of the day and see her friends. Indeed, ever since she was in Baltimore her health has been gradually improving, and long may she live to be what she has truly been, the best of mothers.

"About Christmas we had a slight fall of snow, which rendered the roads for a few days in good condition for sleighing, which is the favorite winter pastime in these parts. Almost every farmer has a good sleigh, and when you have a couple of stout horses and a plentiful supply of thick buffalo skins to keep out the frost, it is the finest riding in the world. Sometimes the citizens will put a great Pennsylvania wagon on runners, and yoke four or five good horses, and then thirty or forty ladies and gentlemen can enjoy themselves right well. Even we boys have our little sleigh, and it would amuse you to see myself and George going at full speed, with Frank on the sleigh, holding little John on his knee.

"It becomes my duty to give some account of our progress at the Grammar School. This is a large, elegant square building, three stories high, opposite the front gate of the college. The basement floor is occupied by

the steward's apartments, the second by two spacious, lofty rooms, above fifty feet square, and divided by two folding-doors into the English and Classical departments. Mr. Roszell has the superintendence, and is a very strict man indeed. Mr. Hey is an Englishman, and is said to be one of the best grammarians in the country. Mr. Cary and Mr. Bunting, under whose care I am at present, are the assistants. Since I entered the school I have gone four or five times through the English grammar, and twice through the Latin, having committed all the rules to memory. George has gone twice through his English grammar, and is now beginning Latin. I have been twice through Tytler's Universal History; I am nearly through my Latin reader and geography, and have drawn a few maps. In arithmetic I am as far as the last section of discount. Besides all this, I have constant exercises in parsing, composition, and elocution. I have written four or five original essays, and declaimed before the school three times, and frequently, besides three or four other tasks, have to write out an entire Latin verb in an evening. So you may believe we are not idle. Indeed, they work us very hard. Mr. Roszell says it will keep us out of mischief, and father says it is the very thing; but, indeed, I really do not know how I should have got along if it had not been for the help of my dear mother, who usually gives her evenings to the purpose.

"In conclusion, allow me to say that we hope the deep interest and liberality you have manifested for our education will be met by a corresponding application and improvement on our part, so that you will not have cause to be ashamed of us.

"Father, mother, George, Francis, William Wilberforce, and John Emory all unite in great affection to yourself, uncles, aunts, and cousins Robinson and Holmes, for whose welfare, present and eternal, we are taught daily to pray to Almighty God. Your affectionate grandson,

"ALFRED COOKMAN."

To this the father adds a postscript:

"The subjoined is a Saturday afternoon exercise which Alfred, at my instance, has written for your inspection, and at your request. You will remember he is only just ten years old, and has been subjected to the interruption of the children, which has given a hurried and careless air to his writing. But the Right Worshipful, the Mayor of Hull and Admiral of the Humber, will treat the American boy magnanimously, especially as it is a first effort at epistolary writing.

"Your *Advertiser* came safe to hand. Your 'inauguration speech' is going the rounds to Philadelphia and Baltimore to friends Suddards and Plaskitt. It was in the college reading-room for a few days, and was admired by

the Faculty and students for its moderation and propriety. Things look squally here both North and South. Canada will not easily settle on the New York frontier. I am solicited to go to Washington, Philadelphia, and Charleston, but will leave it with the Episcopacy. The Lord will provide. Accept our love."

Alfred's "first effort at epistolary writing" certainly needs no apology. If it chances to fall under the eye of any "grammar-school" student of that day, its references to the "fine, elegant square building," and to Mr. Roszell as "a very strict man indeed," will be duly appreciated. Mr. Roszell did not believe in sparing the rod; but whether he ever had cause to administer it to our boy or no, I have not learned. Alfred was studious and obedient; but it must not be supposed he was a saint from the cradle. The moral heroism of his character was not without its physical and mental basis; and possibly, but for the timely training of judicious parents, the metal of his disposition would have betrayed him into many of the rudenesses of other boys. Twice in his life he was whipped—when four years old, for throwing a book at his mother, and, when seven or eight, for fighting with his brother George. Was there ever a boy who didn't enjoy once in a while the exercise of a little power over his younger and weaker brother? How else can he show his muscle? And who so fair a subject for Alfred's muscle as little George? It was a good thing in the mother that she flogged the darling even at four and seven, otherwise "her Solomon" would likely never have been, and her temple to God never have been reared. Not the least lesson taught him while he was learning "literature" from the fair friend, was this whipping-lesson from his mother. But how like a sweet melody breathes the testimony of the dear mother to the fidelity of her boy, even thus young in years: "His boyhood was spent pretty much like that of other boys, in the sports and occupations of that period of his young life. Obedience to parental authority was a prominent characteristic from his earliest years. Prompt-

ness in the performance of duty was another beautiful trait. Industry, patience, and perseverance were very early brought into requisition, and served a good purpose in laying a foundation for the successive periods of after life." In this letter, too, is seen already the dawn of his thorough Americanism, and of his faculty for description. The sleighs and sleigh-rides of a Pennsylvania winter, the sled with himself and George in the harness, "going at full speed, with Frank on the sleigh holding little John on his knee"—are not these to the life? This first letter also shows us Alfred among his brothers. Alas! too soon the buoyant lad, whose heart knew no thrill except of gladness as he guided the sports of his gleeful brothers, was to stand among them an elder brother and a thoughtful counselor. But let the vail rest, for we are yet some way from the awful darkness, and have many important and pleasant steps to take before we reach it.

In this winter of 1838 Alfred made another first effort, of greater moment than his first essay at "epistolary writing." The deep religious seriousness which he had felt in Baltimore had not at any time wholly subsided, and now, under the power of the Holy Spirit, was vividly renewed. "There (Carlisle) I became," he has recorded, "the subject of powerful conviction. Often I have risen from my meal and sought some lonely place where I might weep on account of sin. Frequently I have lain awake on my bed, fearing to sleep, lest I might wake up amid the darkness and horrors of an eternal Hell. Sin became a burden too intolerable to be borne." This is strong language for a youth of ten years, and for one who had been uniformly affectionate and obedient; and yet such an experience even for a youth in those days was hardly exceptional; but though it might have been, in his case it is not surprising in view of the sharp and definite features his religious character always assumed. Here, in the beginning of the spiritual life, is the same positiveness which afterward characterized his maturity. "Sin

is real, Hell is real; I am a sinner; I am in danger of its punishment." Such was the revelation the Holy Ghost made in his conscience, and he felt and acted accordingly. It may not be necessary that every youth should feel thus deeply in order to become regenerate, but for Alfred Cookman it was the very best preparation he could have had for that clear and definite religious experience which subsequently distinguished him. Fortunately he has left a narration of his conversion, which I give entire:

"During the month of February, 1838, while a protracted meeting was in progress in Carlisle, I concluded 'now is the accepted time,' 'now is the day of salvation.' One night, when a social meeting was held at the house of a friend, I struggled with my feelings, and, although it was a fearful cross, I urged my way to a bench which was specially appropriated for penitents. My heart convulsed with penitential sorrow, tears streaming down my cheeks, I said, 'Jesus, Jesus, I give myself away; 'tis all that I can do.' For some hours I sought, without, however, realizing the desire of my heart. The next evening I renewed the effort. The evening after that the service was held in the church; the altar was crowded with seeking souls, principally students of Dickinson College; there seemed to be no place for me, an agonized child. I remember I found my way into one corner of the church. Kneeling all alone, I said, 'Precious Saviour, Thou art saving others, oh, wilt Thou not save me?' As I wept and prayed and struggled, a kind hand was laid on my head. I opened my eyes and found it was a Mr. James Hamilton, a prominent member and an elder in the Presbyterian Church in Carlisle. He had observed my interest, and obeying the promptings of a kind, sympathizing Christian heart, he came to encourage and help me. I remember how sweetly he unfolded the nature of faith and the plan of salvation. I said, 'I will believe, I do believe; I now believe that Jesus is my Saviour; that He saves me—yes, even now;' and immediately,

"'The opening heavens did round me shine
With beams of sacred bliss;
And Jesus showed His mercy mine,
And whispered I am His.'

"I love to think of it now; it fills my heart unutterably full of gratitude, love, and joy. 'Happy day; oh, happy day, when Jesus washed my sins away!'"

It will thus be seen that the great change wrought in his heart, as presented in his own language in mature life, was as decided in the evidences of its thoroughness, as were his convictions for sin.

The altar was thronged with older persons, mostly students, whose presence and importance very naturally engrossed attention; he was only a little boy; his feelings might be regarded as the result of a sympathetic excitement, and not worthy of especial notice; but he understood himself, and oppressed with sin and bent upon relief, "he found himself in one corner of the church, all alone." Ah! my little brother, God's Spirit was doing a genuine work in your young heart. Your great Creator had also put iron in your "make-up" when He formed you. There were hours coming when again "all alone with your Saviour" you must stand; hours so bitter in their loneliness that only Jesus and self-reliance can keep you firm to duty and give you victory. Although Alfred was off in the corner, God sent him a kind friend who opened the kingdom of God to him. There are always some great souls who can understand the hearts of little children, and have faith enough to anticipate the harvests which will come of tiny seeds. But Alfred had good companionship among the youths brought to God in this revival. The great Head of the Church was electing others who, like himself, were to be marked and useful men.

CHAPTER IV.

REV. GEORGE G. COOKMAN IN THE CAPITAL OF THE NATION.—THE YOUTH OF ALFRED.

THE time had come—spring of 1838—when Mr. Cookman must again remove, and go he knew not whither, at the appointment of the Episcopacy. As intimated in the letter already quoted, Philadelphia, Charleston, and Washington wished his services. To the latter city, the national capital, he was sent; and the cozy college town was exchanged for the political centre of the nation, and now upon a broader scene the eloquent and devout preacher was to make his appearance. The two years at Carlisle were invaluable to the man who henceforth must stand before "kings." Two more years, and four or six more, would have been valuable to Alfred. It was hard for him to leave the "stately grammar school," with its "strict discipline," and to give up the prospect of a speedy entrance into the walls of the college, a prize so coveted by every true "'prep;" but when the itinerant wheel rolls, the schools of boys must stand out of the way, and so Alfred must go with father and mother and brothers; he was too young to be left behind, and he must do the best he can in the pursuit of "literature" in Washington City. Mr. Cookman was stationed at Wesley Chapel, then a new charge, comprising in its membership many of the most cultivated and progressive Methodists of the city.

The proximity of his church to the Capitol rendered it convenient of access to the members of Congress and to strangers visiting Washington during the sessions. His ministry began at once to excite attention; soon the chapel was thronged with hearers from all sections of the country, irrespective of denomi-

national connections, and his reputation was promptly established as a first-class pulpit orator. It may be safely affirmed that no minister ever entered Washington who maintained from first to last a greater ascendency over the popular heart. Men and women of every grade of society, of every station in the government, were equally charmed by his forcible and beautiful eloquence. Senators, heads of Departments and their clerks, rich and poor, the *littérateur* and the illiterate man, the slaveholder and the slave, all alike were captured by his magical tongue, and he swayed their hearts as with the wand of a magician—with "a warrior's eye beneath a philosopher's brow," his spell was irresistible.

Mr. Cookman had a reputation for eloquence before his advent in Washington. This undoubtedly helped him to an expectant hearing; but, if he had not possessed genuine power, his failure must have been proportionately great, as the previous expectations aroused had been high. To sustain a reputation is proof of real ability. In most instances, however, his power was attested by his signal influence over men who, outside of the Methodist Church, had never heard of him, or who went first to listen to him with comparative indifference. Oftentimes the casual listener, who had come to church to worship, to hear any body, and who was not acquainted either with the name or the personal appearance of Mr. Cookman, was so strongly impressed as to wish to hear him constantly ever afterward. As an example illustrative of this, and also showing how Mr. Cookman came to be elected Chaplain to Congress, I give here part of a sketch from the Hon. O. H. Smith, then United States Senator from Indiana, which appeared in the *Indianapolis Journal* soon after Mr. Cookman's death:

"It was Sabbath morning. The last of the city church-bells was ringing as I left my boarding-house on Capitol Hill, at Washington City, for Wesley Chapel. It was quarterly meeting. The preacher had closed his sermon, when there arose at the desk a slender, spare man, about five feet eight,

dark complexion, black hair falling carelessly over his high forehead, lean, bony face, wide mouth, round breasted black coat with velvet falling collar, black vest and pantaloons. Addressing the congregation, he said: 'We desire to take up a small collection for the relief of destitute, worn-out Methodist preachers and their families. We appeal to-day to the hearts of the congregation,' and took his seat. A large collection followed. I whispered to Patrick G. Good, of Ohio, who sat by me, 'Who is that?' 'Don't you know him? It is George G. Cookman.' The next Sabbath I was at the chapel again. Mr. Cookman preached. I returned satisfied that he was no ordinary man. The election for Chaplain of the Senate came on a few days after, and without the knowledge of Mr. Cookman, I privately suggested his name to the Senators around me. The most of them had heard him preach. He was elected Chaplain by a decided vote over Rev. Henry Slicer,* against whom there was not the least objection; but we wanted to bring Mr. Cookman more prominently before the public. The next Sabbath he preached his first sermon in the Hall of the House, to a very large congregation, from the text, 'The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.' He made a profound impression on his hearers that day, which seemed to increase with every succeeding sermon."

Such a testimony was all the more creditable to Mr. Cookman, coming, as it did, from a Presbyterian gentleman. The interest shown in promoting his election to the Chaplaincy of the United States Senate was certainly magnanimous in Mr. Smith, but is the more significant as showing the remarkable influence which Mr. Cookman gained over those who heard him.

It was in the winter of 1838–9 that his election to this honorable position occurred. Politics were running high. The country has never known a more excited political canvass, except during the late civil war, than was then pending. The Whigs and the Democrats were the two great parties which disputed for victory. The first talents of the land were gathered in the capital. Orators, whose names are forever identified with the classic period of American eloquence; statesmen, who were probing and settling the principles of constitutional law for

* This is a grave error. Dr. Slicer, though afterward repeatedly elected to the Chaplaincy, was not at this time a candidate for the office.

generations yet unborn; sagacious men from all the pursuits of life, elected to represent the diversified interests of widely differing sections, were experimenting in the problems of banking, protection, free-trade, of slave and free labor, of colonization, of internal improvements; soldiers, whose laurels won in the late war with England were scarcely yet withered, and who, jealous of every possible encroachment of the mother-country, were eagerly watching for the adjustment of all difficulties between the two nations on a satisfactory basis—these all were in the Congress of 1838–9. The illustrious triumvirs—Clay, Webster, and Calhoun—and many others of hardly less fame, such as Benton, Berrien, Preston, Wright, Buchanan, occupied seats in the Senate. But Mr. Cookman was equally at home here as he had been at Carlisle before the professors.

A man of one work, his simple, devout piety was unchanged, and here, as elsewhere, inspired his preaching and his conduct. He so preached and so lived, with such an evident singleness of purpose, with such unaffected humility of spirit, as to win universal respect and confidence. His theme was Christ crucified; his object the salvation of men. Whether he preached in the Hall of the House of Representatives or in his own church, his sermons were not only eloquent in the popular sense, but appropriate, forcible, and direct, and uniformly conveyed to those who heard him proof of his deep and thorough religious earnestness. In these hours of responsibility, when the wisest were ready to receive his instructions; and of danger, when the incense of praise was perfuming his life, there was need of all that close application to books, that profound devotion to Christ, and that jealousy of self which he cultivated in his earlier religious experience. There is such a thing as the hiding of power in the present for the uses of the future. Young men, whom the great Master leads through conflicts, through long and tedious days of proving, through earnest and self-denying wrestles for purity and knowledge, do not always realize

that they are storing the strength which is afterward to be their great resource. The highest proof of a great mind is its reserved force. In this element Mr. Cookman was pre-eminent in his sphere. His hold on God, his clear-sightedness, his firm convictions, his understanding of his own aims, his thorough self-abnegation, enabled him to stand unawed before the wisdom of the nation.

As might be expected, a ministry thus faithful was not without its direct fruits. In an ordinary church immediate results are looked for, and usually follow; but too often the highest ends of preaching, when to such congregations as then assembled in the House of Representatives, are left to the remote future. Some of the first men of the land were deeply moved by the minister's searching and persuasive appeals. Among them was ex-President Franklin Pierce, at that time one of the Senators from New Hampshire. Mr. Pierce never ceased to cherish for the memory of Mr. Cookman the most reverent affection, and although he did not at this time take a decided open stand for Christ and unite with the Methodist Church, it will be remembered that in his later life he manifested the highest respect for religion, and some years before his death, on profession of faith, he was received into the communion of the Protestant Episcopal Church. It will be no breach of confidence, now that both of these men of God have passed away, if I make public Mr. Cookman's own account of Mr. Pierce's awakening, written at the time to Professor Caldwell, of Dickinson College. Reference is also made to Senator Linn, of Missouri, who likewise manifested much religious feeling:

"WASHINGTON CITY, D. C., February 28th, 1839.

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"This morning I had an interesting and memorably affecting interview with a friend of yours, Senator Pierce, of New Hampshire, who is at present the subject of deep, poignant convictions of the Spirit of God. He has been attending my ministry regularly ever since I have been in the city, and for the last three or four weeks his heart has been broken up indeed, and

a more sincere, humble, penitent sinner I have seldom seen. He opened his mind, he said, for the first time to any human being on the overwhelming subject of his soul's salvation, and while tears coursed down his cheeks, and he paced the room—and then sat down and commenced anew the history of his life and the convictions of God's Spirit upon his mind; my own mind was deeply affected, for he is a gentleman to whom I am very much attached—an amiable, frank, sincere character. He expresses his intention of attending the ministry and class-meetings of the Methodists on his return to Concord, and also here in this city, if spared to see another session of Congress. He requested me to pray for him on the spot, in my parlor, and appeared deeply affected and earnestly engaged for the salvation of his soul.

"Senator Linn, of Missouri, has also manifested great interest on the subject of religion. He is intimate with Senator Pierce—may both be brought into the favor and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you are acquainted with the Rev. J. M. F., the stationed preacher at Concord, New Hampshire, a few lines from you advising of Senator Pierce's peculiar religious state might be expedient—although I think it best in *general* to keep these cases away from the bulk of our people, who talk too *much* when *great* sinners are convicted, which often defeats the desired object. If you could write to the Senator it might have a good effect."

Among Professor Caldwell's unpublished manuscripts is a letter to the Senator, breathing a wisdom, purity, fidelity, and affection which must have been not only kindly received, but have made an enduring impression upon his mind. One of its closing sentences is, "Permit me, my dear sir, to express a hope that your application to the fountain of all truth, and to the source of all wisdom, may be so successful that you may never have occasion to rest your hopes for this world or the next on the doubts and uncertainties of skepticism—the system to which I believe all ultimately resort who are so unfortunate as to find no better."

But I must not forget, in the work and fame which were thus clustering so thickly about the father, the lovely youth who was unobtrusively pursuing the even tenor of his way. It was Mr. Cookman's habit to make a companion of Alfred. Frequently he took him to the Senate Chamber, where he received the attentions of Senators in the genial greetings which occurred.

He was just then as handsome, well-formed, and as engaging a boy of eleven years as could be found. He could appreciate, if not the intrinsic worth, the manifest popularity of his father as evinced in the position to which he was chosen, in the crowds that thronged his ministry, and in the compliments bestowed on his preaching; and it is not to be supposed he was indifferent to it all. His young heart swelled, no doubt, with emotions of pride for his father, and for himself as the son of such a father, and the consequent partner in his fame. The outside world of men and things into which Alfred was thus introduced, differed vastly from the simple surroundings of Carlisle—great men, great buildings, great measures, great pageants; these now crowded the thoughts that so recently were taken up and satisfied with books, play, and prayers.

I spoke of the disadvantage his education must suffer by his removal from the grammar school at Carlisle just as he was getting into thorough drill; equally it should not surprise us if his religious life, when removed from familiar and genial friendships into new and strange associations, were to meet with a chill which would abate its warmth, if not stop its growth. The first few days and nights of a plant's transfer from the nursery to the open air, are always days and nights of peril to its opening buds. How many young Christians, who commence with vigorous promise, fall away and perish because of a too sudden change of place or of pastors! Alfred did not lose his religious faith; but, by his own acknowledgement, his experience declined in vitality—he was not the same joyous little Christian for some months that he had been soon after being "all alone with Jesus" in the corner of the church.

"Some time after this we removed to Washington City, in the District of Columbia. Here I fell in with new associates who felt no interest in the subject of religion, and declined a little in my warmth and zeal, and partook a little too much of their spirit." The subsidence of his piety was of short duration.

"The camp-meeting season rolled around; I expressed a desire to go; my mother cheerfully consented, observing, 'My son, I want you to seek at the meeting an entire restoration of your former happy experience, and regain every step you have lost by want of watchfulness.' Her counsel followed me to the forest. I sought God again. I remember the night; I remember the circumstances; the struggle was long and painful, it continued almost to the breaking of the day. Glory to God! however, He who said, 'Return unto Me, backsliding Israel, and I will heal all thy backslidings and love thee freely,' heard and answered, and restored unto me the joy of His salvation. Oh how beautiful the following morning appeared! the sky seemed bluer than before, the air sweeter, the trees greener, the landscape lovelier—all nature seemed to appear in a new dress. I felt like saying, 'Come unto me all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul.' My precious father had gone off the ground to spend the night. I knew the way he would most probably return. I hastened in that direction, saw him coming, sprung into his arms, fell on his neck, and told him how happy I was. Since then I have had a place in the Church of Jesus Christ. In the midst of great unfaithfulness and unworthiness God has borne with and preserved me, and now I feel to say,

"'Here I'll raise my Ebenezer,
Hither by Thy help I've come.'

"I attribute my conversion under God to the instruction, example, and influence of pious parents."

Henceforth the camp-meeting was to be hallowed ground to Alfred Cookman. The father was nowhere more effective than when on "the stand" before a crowd at camp-meeting. The ample platform, the absence of huge breastworks, the direct contact with the worshiping throng, the presence of earnest brethren, the natural and artificial accompaniments offered the exact conditions of his happiest efforts; but Alfred was to find

in the camp-meeting all these aids, and more—the memory of this happy renewal of religious joy which he has so graphically narrated. His attachment to the camp-meeting, the ardor and constancy with which he used it as an agency of good, and the gracious results accomplished by him through it, ought not to surprise us. It is manifest from this account, our young friend could not consent to be religious by halves—he must be a whole-hearted Christian, or not at all. Entireness becomes the fundamental law of his spiritual life. If these pages shall disclose any thing in regard to him, it must be, "All for God"—"first, last, midst." He returned from the camp-meeting with his heart all aglow with sacred joy, and from the impulse which it awakened began at once to seek means of personal usefulness. He must communicate what he knew and felt to other boys; and so, of his free motion, "he established a prayer-meeting for boys of his own age, and worked in various ways to impress his own spirit upon all with whom he came in contact. Many were induced to take their first steps in a religious life through his example and persuasion."

In the autumn (1838) he united with the Church. His father had thought it best to keep him on "probation" until he gave satisfactory proofs of a stable piety. Soon after his removal to Washington he commenced to exercise himself on the platform as a speaker, and at that early age received much commendation and evinced great promise, so that "predictions were freely made of what the future of this young speaker might be, to which the father readily assented." It was no little credit to the youthful "Cicero" that his father readily assented, for, whether for banter or not, Mr. Cookman used to rouse the mother's jealousy for her little "Temple builder" by intimating, "Your Solomon is a rather dull boy!" I doubt if he was even then so noted for quickness of perception as for tenacity in sticking to a lesson until he had mastered it, and then holding it fast. What is of most interest at this particular point is—he

appears before us at twelve years of age a decidedly religious lad in experience and action, and a speaker, thus affording us a clear view of the dawn of that personal career which was eventually to open into full-orbed day.

Mr. Cookman during the winters of 1839–40, 1840–41, was at the zenith of his fame. The newspapers of the day not unfrequently noticed his preaching in the most complimentary terms. Numerous extracts could be given showing the high estimate in which he was held, both as a man and a Christian minister. A correspondent of the *United States Gazette*, then the leading paper of Philadelphia, under date of January 7th, 1839, wrote thus of one of his earlier efforts: "Yesterday the Hall of the House of Representatives was crowded to overflowing for the purpose of hearing Mr. Cookman, the new Chaplain of the Senate. * * * All the *élite* of Washington City were present. Thronged as we are with strangers during the sessions of Congress, there is no place of worship to which they feel that they have a sort of legitimate right of *entrée*, except when the House of the People of the United States is converted into the House of God: thither they usually flock for their religious exercises. All sects as well as all ranks join their devotions here, and I have always observed that the ministry, with good taste much to their credit, when addressing audiences of such peculiar character, shun those points of doctrine which are productive of controversy, and content themselves with inculcating religion in its broad, simple, and incontrovertible sense. Mr. Cookman is of the Methodist persuasion, and has won considerable celebrity for his oratorical power. Slightly made, of an age scarcely exceeding thirty years (as far as I could form an opinion at a distance), free from affectation of style and manner, he held his large and enlightened auditory in the deepest attention for about an hour, while he expounded from the words of St. Paul, 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation.' The descriptions of the

apostle were given with a graphic power which was attested by the deep silence and breathless attention of all present. In that vast circle, so entirely were all absorbed, that the cracking of a chair caused a visible sensation. From the death of Stephen, the first martyr, he tracked him to the arraignment before Felix, marking every step with a precision which gave individuality to his posture; and, judging from the countenances of all around me, I was satisfied the preacher had established himself on a high basis as a Christian orator."

An occasion which afforded an opportunity for the versatile talents of Mr. Cookman, particularly for the expression of pathos as an element of power, occurred at the funeral services of the Hon. Thaddeus Betts, of Connecticut. Mr. Van Buren, the President of the United States, Mr. Forsyth, Mr. Woodbury, Mr. Poinsett, and Mr. Paulding, the heads of Departments, with a great number of the foreign Ministers and members of both Houses of Congress, were present. A correspondent of the *Baltimore American* wrote of the sermon by Mr. Cookman: "It was one of the most eloquent and appropriate performances I have ever heard, and, though continued through an unusual length of time, it was listened to with almost breathless attention." The Hon. Mr. Smith, of Indiana, before quoted, said of this occasion: "I distinctly recollect one of his figures of speech—'As the human family come upon the great stage of life, they find at every fork of the road the finger-board distinctly pointing to the grave—to the grave! There is no other road to travel from infancy to old age and death, but the road that leads to the grave.' There was not a dry eye in the Chamber when he closed his sermon of one hour, and sang alone—his voice was melody itself—the single verse of the hymn,

"'And must this body die,
This well-wrought frame decay?
And must these active limbs of mine
Lie mouldering in the clay?'"

Nor was Mr. Cookman wanting in that delicate humor which is so often allied with real pathos. He could use it too as circumstances required, so that, while it would cut and correct, it rarely offended those at whom it was aimed, or the good taste of the most refined hearers. A writer in the *New York American* said of a passage in one of his sermons: "He ventured once to-day on delicate ground. After having stated what the world is learning from the Church, he observed, in substance, 'that statesmen are imitating the apostles of Christianity, and have become itinerating preachers of late, and that within a few months there have been many convictions, many conversions, and no want of songs and anthems (to the triumphs of Truth).' The idea of this parenthesis, it is true, was not openly conveyed; but it occasioned many smiles, and some red faces.* However, the preacher escaped just in season to save himself. It was a nice touch. The effect of all such things depends upon the manner and the tact of the man, in connection with the general respect he inspires. I do not think any body that was present will scold about it, but it was a close rub." I can not forbear quoting a little further from this writer. His description will recall Mr. Cookman to those who had the pleasure of hearing him, and to those who had not, it will convey a more adequate notion of the man and his preaching:

"I have already said that I think he is deservedly popular. He is modest, unassuming, and dignified. Withal he appears to be a good man in his appropriate calling. In the pulpit he has much action. In person slender, long arms, thin face, dark complexion, bushy hair, and can display his person in oratorical action to great advantage. His voice is good, and susceptible of great power. His language is well chosen and simple. His elocution slow, deliberate, and effective—imparting great power occasionally to a single word, to a monosyllable, by his voice and manner. But it is not manner alone. The thought

* The allusion was to the political canvass of 1840.

is the soul, and is always worthy of attention. He has now and then a theatric start or sudden flight, with branching arms and stentorian voice or falsetto scream; not, however, offensive to those who are disposed to tolerate liberties of this sort. It is the man enacting himself, or discoursing in his own way. He is decidedly one of the most remarkable models of eloquence there is in either House of Congress, and many of them might take lessons of him with profit."

To explain fully the character of this eminent man, and the wide-spread influence which he exerted, especially beyond his own denomination, it is necessary to note the catholicity of his spirit. I insert the following extract from a Washington paper as illustrative of this trait, and also for its allusion to one of the most intellectual and saintly ministers which American Presbyterianism has produced: "On Sunday afternoon last the Rev. Mr. Cookman, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so justly celebrated for his pulpit oratory and liberal sentiments, preached in the Rev. Mr. McLain's Church (First Presbyterian, on Four-and-a-half Street). His text was *John* xvii., 21: 'That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.' The reverend gentleman stated 'that he had selected this text for the reason that, in conversation with the late Rev. Dr. Nevins (of the First Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, whose precious memory even the iron hand of time can scarcely ever obliterate from the minds of the Christian Church) during his last illness, the Doctor observed that, if he was again privileged to occupy his pulpit but once more, he would endeavor to preach from that text. Before the succeeding Sabbath he was taken to his everlasting rest and reward.' No two spirits were ever more congenial than those of Nevins and Cookman, and during the delivery of his discourse it seemed as if the mantle of the departed Elijah had fallen upon the speaker; and, with thoughts that breathe and words

that burn, he illustrated and enforced the subject, giving full utterance to the sentiments of his departed friend."

In the spring of 1840 Mr. Cookman was appointed to the charge of the Church in Alexandria City, D. C.* He still retained his Chaplaincy, and regularly fulfilled its duties until the expiration of the Congress of the fourth of March, 1841. His pastorate in Alexandria was attended with all the marks of public favor and of ministerial usefulness which had accompanied him in other communities. There occurred nothing to the father to which any special significance can be attached; but with Alfred it was quite different. He had seen but little of slavery since he lived a child on the eastern shore of Maryland. In Pennsylvania and New Jersey the colored race was free; in Baltimore the free blacks were more numerous than the slaves, and this was true also of Washington. He had seen few, if any, of the more painful aspects of the institution; and young as he was, it had seemed to him only a form of domestic servitude, relieved by the kind relationships often subsisting between masters and slaves. In Alexandria a free black was rather an exception. If, however, he had seen slavery even here only as he had been accustomed to it, there is no likelihood that any impression would have been made upon his mind of decided aversion to it.

Near his father's residence was one of those painful features of the domestic slave-trade—a slave-pen or jail—which the boy used often to pass, and where he saw poor men, women, and children confined behind iron grates, sometimes manacled, for no other crime than that they were owned as property, and could be sold hither and thither by their owners at pleasure. Alexandria was a dépôt, to which the slaves purchased in Maryland and the District of Columbia were brought, and where they were lodged before being sent to supply the cotton-growing states. Sometimes at the very doors of the jail would hap-

* Alexandria was afterward re-ceded to the State of Virginia.

pen those scenes which were well fitted to rend a stouter heart than that of our sensitive young friend. The husband would be rudely separated from the wife, and parents from their helpless children; and these poor creatures, with all the instincts of human nature, strengthened by tender associations, would vent their sorrow in bitter cries, which gathered around them a sympathizing crowd—how could Alfred look on without emotion, and without forming a deep hatred to laws which sanctioned such occurrences? Such sights were enough to wound the heart of a boy born in the midst of slavery; how could they do otherwise than curdle the blood of a youth born of English parents, on free soil, and with such a soul as Alfred Cookman possessed? The iron then went deep into his heart, and forever after he was the enemy of slavery, and steadfastly did what he could consistently to abate and destroy it. This is the only scrap of Alfred's education or history in Alexandria of which I have any information.

The disaster which removed Mr. Cookman from the scene of his usefulness and from the world was fast approaching. In the spring of 1841 he determined to visit England, and all his plans were accordingly made to sail from New York early in March. He had been appointed by the American Bible Society a fraternal delegate to represent it at the anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society to be held at Exeter Hall, London, and was to be made bearer of the first dispatches to the British Government from the incoming Administration of General Harrison; his main object, however, in going over, was to see again his venerable father, and "to drop a tear on the grave of his mother." It was fitting, in view of his position and popularity, that his farewell sermon should be preached in the Capitol. He was regarded as a pastor not only by the Alexandria Church, but by the Senate of the United States and large numbers of the floating and unchurched population. A well-nigh romantic interest centred in him. The spell of his eloquence and the aroma of his character had completely fascinated the people.

Never were there circumstances attending the delivery of a sermon more fully adapted to awaken in the preacher all his capacity of thought and emotion, or to render it more thrilling and abiding in the minds of the hearers. Washington was literally thronged with strangers from all parts of the country. General Harrison had been elected President by an overwhelming majority, and his inauguration was about to take place in the presence of crowds the like of which for numbers and refinement the metropolis of the nation had never before seen. Mr. Cookman's fame was now commensurate with the American public; though no politician, he was known to be in quiet sympathy with the dominant party; his piety was universally conceded; his oratorical supremacy none disputed; expectation was on tip-toe. It may be safely affirmed that never had sacred orator more conditions in his favor. Added to all this was his speedy departure for a foreign land, to encounter the perils of a voyage from which he might never return—which consideration helped further to deepen in the popular heart the sense of his value, and to intensify in his own heart the conviction of his religious and ministerial responsibility. But he rose with the occasion. The external excitement infected him; the grandeur of his spirit never before attained to such proportions, nor shone with such effective light. The account given by eye-witnesses can best convey some true notion of the man, the hour, and the place:

"The session of Congress was about to close upon the administration of Mr. Van Buren. The inauguration of General Harrison was soon to take place. Mr. Cookman had all his arrangements made to visit England on the steamer *President*. The first dispatch from the new Administration was to be confided to his charge. The next Sabbath he was to take leave of the members of Congress in his farewell sermon. The day came. An hour before the usual time the crowd was seen filling the pavement of the avenue, and passing up the hill to Representative Hall, which was soon filled to overflowing, and hundreds, unable to get seats, went away disappointed. I obtained a seat early in front of the Clerk's desk. John Quincy Adams

sat in the Speaker's chair, facing Mr. Cookman. The whole space on the rostrum and steps was filled with Senators and Representatives. The moment had come. Mr. Cookman, evidently much affected, kneeled in a thrilling prayer, and rose with his eyes blinded with tears. His voice faltered with suppressed emotion as he gave out the hymn,

"'When marshaled on the mighty plain,
The glittering hosts bestud the sky,
One star alone of all the train
Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.

"'Hark! hark! to God the chorus breaks,
From every host, from every gem;
But one alone the Saviour speaks,
It is the star of Bethlehem.

"'Once on the raging seas I rode,
The storm was loud, the night was dark—
The ocean yawned, and rudely blowed
The wind that tossed my foundering bark.'

"The hymn was sung by Mr. Cookman alone. I can yet, in imagination, hear his voice, as it filled the large hall, and the last sounds, with their echoes, died away in the dome.

"'And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.

"'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.'

"Mr. Cookman was more affected when he gave us the text than I had ever seen him before. He several times passed his handkerchief over his eyes before he began. The first sentences are fresh in my recollection: 'When Massillon, one of the greatest divines that France ever knew, was called to preach the funeral service of the departed king, in the Cathedral, at Paris, before the reigning king, the royal family, the chambers, and the grandees of France, he took with him to the sacred desk a little golden urn, containing a lock of hair of the late king. The immense congregation was seated, and the silence of death reigned. Massillon arose, held the little urn in his fingers, his hand resting upon the sacred cushion. All eyes were intently fixed upon him. Moments, minutes passed—Massillon stood motionless, pale as a statue; the feeling became intense; many believed he was struck dumb before the august assembly; many sighed and groaned aloud; many

eyes were suffused with tears, when the hand of Massillon was seen slowly raising the little golden urn, his eyes fixed upon the king. As his hand returned again to the cushion, the loud and solemn voice of Massillon was heard in every part of the Cathedral, 'God alone is great!' So I say to you to-day, my beloved hearers, there is no human greatness—'*God alone is great!*'

"The subject was on the day of judgment. I had heard it preached before many times, but never as I heard it then. The immense congregation was held almost breathless with the most beautiful and powerful sermon I ever heard. He spoke of the final separation on the great day of judgment, and fancied the anger of the Lord locking the door that led to the bottomless pit, stepping upon the ramparts, letting fall the key into the abyss below, and dropping the last tear over fallen and condemned man. He closed —'I go to the land of my birth, to press once more to my heart my aged father and drop a tear on the grave of my sainted mother; farewell!—farewell!' and he sank down overpowered to his seat, while the whole congregation responded with sympathizing tears."

A correspondent of the *National Intelligencer*, describing the same scene, after quoting Mr. Cookman's closing words, says: "There was something prophetic, solemn, and deeply affecting in the tones and manner of the preacher. * * * All who had known him, or who had listened with wrapt attention to the eloquence which gushed from his lips, touched as with a living coal from the altar, were moved to tears, and seemed to feel as if they were taking in reality a last farewell of one who had given a new ardor to their piety, and thrown an additional interest into the sanctuary. The whole scene was in no ordinary degree grand, imposing, and affecting. The magnificent hall, a fit temple for the worship of the living God; the crowd that had assembled to hear the last sermon of the minister whose eloquence they so much admired; the attitude of the preacher, and the solemn and prophetic farewell, all conspired to excite feelings of the deepest solemnity and of the most intense interest."

CHAPTER V.

REV. GEORGE G. COOKMAN LOST AT SEA.—ALFRED'S RAPID PROGRESS.

MR. COOKMAN spent a few weeks about Washington, completing his arrangements and taking leave of friends, and immediately after the first dispatch of the new Administration was prepared by Mr. Webster and committed to him, he left for New York. His last words to the gentleman so freely quoted from were, "May Heaven bless you, Mr. Smith; if ever I return you shall see me in the West." He spent Sunday, 7th of March, in Philadelphia, worshiping with and taking the communion at the hands of his friend, the Rev. Dr. Suddards, rector of Grace Protestant Episcopal Church. On Monday he went to New York, and on Tuesday evening preached his last sermon in the Vestry Street Methodist Episcopal Church, of which he was to become the pastor after his return from England. He had intended to go to Boston and there take one of the Cunard steamers, but at the solicitation of friends changed his mind, and embarked on the steam-ship *President* at New York on the 11th, for Liverpool. He left amid the tears and congratulations of friends. Neither the vessel nor any of her company was ever after heard from.

Various conjectures were given at the time as to the ship's probable fate, the most likely of which is that, as a violent storm had been raging for days, she foundered soon after getting to sea. Hopes were entertained for a long time that she might be safe; or, on the supposition that the vessel had foundered, or had been burned, or had been crushed by icebergs, it was hoped that her crew and passengers had been rescued.

As the time arrived when tidings were due from the steamer, and no word came, the suspense both in England and America became intense and painful. The excitement prevailed among all classes. Steam-ship navigation was then comparatively in its infancy, and an accident to a steamer very naturally awakened more attention than now when fleets of them are plowing the ocean. The fact that Mr. Cookman was a passenger heightened the public interest. His name was on every lip; his merits as minister and orator, his worth as a citizen, his loss to the Church and the nation, but above all to his young family, were the theme of general conversation and newspaper comment. At length all hope for the ship and her passengers died out of the public mind; but not so in the heart of the stricken and devoted wife—hope lived in her heart many days after it had perished in the hearts of all others. She lived months and years with the expectation of seeing him return. The house was daily and nightly arranged—his chair at the table ready to be vacated, and all else adjusted with the expectation of his coming at any hour.

Although not yet an accomplished fact with Mrs. Cookman, it was an accomplished fact that her husband had perished in the great waters. That "vasty deep" which he so loved, and from which he so often drew for choice imagery in the illustration of truth, and in the use of which he was almost without a peer, had become his grave. "He has discouraged me," said a Senator, distinguished for his eloquence, "in the use of my happiest figures. There is such a richness, beauty, and force in his illustrations from the ocean, so far surpassing my reach, that I know not that I shall ever again attempt to use them." That ocean which he had several times crossed, where death had before stared him in the face, all whose myriad ways in storm and calm had become familiar to his mind, whose endless forms and colorings he had studied with an artist's eye and transferred with an artist's skill to the tables of memory, in solitary communion with which he

had had so many thoughts of God and human destiny, so many seasons of prayer, praise, and aspiration, in whose awful silence and restless life he had found such strange sympathy with his own nature, from which he had in all these respects received so much for his own enriching, had now at last received him. His loss pierced thousands of loving souls with acutest sorrow.

But painful as was his death, the manner of it—sudden—in the sea—involved in mystery—threw around his end a tragic charm which well comported with the brilliancy of his reputation, and which served to deepen and extend his already widespread influence. In the prime of his life, at the height of his fame, in the fullness of his intellectual powers, and in the maturity of grace, he was not, for God took him. A star of the first order was suddenly quenched. But another star was to arise in due time, if not of equal splendor, yet certainly of equal clearness and steadiness in its shining.

I could fill pages with the public and private testimonials of the grief which pervaded all classes of society, and all circles of pursuit and profession, at the sad death of this eminent and good man. It would be pleasant to linger over these tender and discriminating tributes to his virtues, his services to the cause of Christ, and the rare eloquence with which God had endowed him, and which he had so successfully cultivated, but I am admonished by the limits of space and purpose which confine me, and the demand that I should hasten to bring forward into greater prominence the youth whose name and fame so quickly followed in the wake of his father's.

Mr. Cookman wished and intended to take Alfred with him to England. He thought it would be gratifying to the grandfather to see him; and the son had attained an age at which he could be a companion to his father, and also derive much improvement from travel. I can imagine how strong the paternal instinct was in him, and how he must have yearned to have his first-born accompany him in so long an absence from

home, and under circumstances so suited to render them both entirely happy. There is nothing upon which a child can depend for safety more than this same paternal instinct. Ulysses was consistent in his feigned madness—plowing the sea-shore with a horse and bull yoked together, and sowing salt instead of grain—until his little son Telemachus was placed in the way, when his deception was betrayed by his showing sufficient foresight to turn away the plow from killing the child. Mr. Cookman could not but feel what a privation it would be to his wife to have Alfred leave her for so long a time, and what an additional affliction it would be should neither the husband nor the son be permitted to return. The lad, also, was of sufficient maturity in years and character to be of great assistance to the mother in her care of the younger children. And so, finally, Mr. Cookman yielded his preference, and it was left to the boy himself to elect—to go with his father or to stay with his mother.

It is difficult to see how any thing could have been more attractive to a youth of his age, tastes, and habits, than this trip homeward to England with his devoted father. He had heard the old country, grandfather, uncles, aunts, and cousins talked of, till his boyish fancy reveled in the thought of seeing them and their beautiful homes. But Alfred Cookman loved his mother as few boys ever did, he loved his brothers and sister as few elder brothers have ever done, his loyalty to duty had already become a passion, and his decision was given accordingly: "I will stay with mother, and help her take care of the children." These words give the key-note of his character. They not only preserved his life, but became the warp across which the web and woof of that life were woven into a fabric so strong and beautiful. He would do his duty first, and standing by his duty brought him into responsibilities which, under the divine blessing, made him what he was—a prince among God's spiritual Israel. The father then had to go alone. He went off cheerfully. Among the last words he spoke as the family

sat before the open fire, were these: "Now, boys, if your father sinks in the ocean, his soul will go direct to God, and you must meet him in heaven."

"There was sorrow on the sea." There was sorrow on the land. In the homestead at Kingston-upon-Hull, an aged father was bowed with grief; in many Christian houses, where the image of the saintly pastor was hung, if not on the walls, yet in the memories of grateful hearts, there was genuine mourning; but in the circle where the desolate widow gathered her fatherless children to a heart from which the warmth and light had well-nigh gone out, striving in vain to impart to them a comfort which she herself did not feel, who can depict the abyss of suffering into which this lovely family was thus suddenly plunged! Every body was kind to them. Friends vied with each other in grateful offices. Warm hearts and cheerful homes were opened to them. But the very universality of regret and affection which met them seemed for a time only to help their hearts to compass the extent of their bereavement. What must be their loss, in the loss of him whom every body else, even the comparative stranger, so missed and lamented! The brightness of sympathy often casts our sorrows into a darker shadow.

How like an angel of light Alfred now came to the side of his mother! He restrained his own grief, and always appeared before her calm and cheerful. With the utmost delicacy he watched over her, anticipating all her wants with a foresight beyond his years, and exhibiting for her most hidden feelings a feminine tenderness of which she scarcely supposed him possessed. Mrs. Cookman, from reveling in the brilliance of her husband's fame and usefulness, found herself all at once in such utter darkness that her mind from the shock sank into the deepest gloom. So overwhelmed was she, that for two years she did not recover her cheerfulness. The name of her husband could not be pronounced in her presence without unnerving her, and so the mention of the father was studiously avoid-

ed by the children. All the while Alfred was preserving such a composed demeanor in the presence of his mother, he would lie awake nights thinking of his father. It was some distance from the quiet home in which the family were entertained to the nearest post-office, and as he often went for the mail, his heart would sink within him when no letter came from father, or from any one giving tidings of the ill-fated steamer. "How I did dread," he said in after years, "to return home, and meet my dear mother without a letter and see her disappointment!"

Thus at thirteen years of age, when the thought of play is uppermost with most boys, was our young friend abruptly forced by the providence of God into a trying and important relation to the family. He must be a husband as well as son to his mother; he must be father as well as eldest brother to the children. It is easy to conjecture, but impossible to know what would have been the course of Alfred's life, what the influence upon his character, what different impress he might have received, had his father lived. His training thus far, under the joint and harmonious direction of father and mother, was entirely judicious; he was as promising as the parents could wish; and, in all probability, had the father been spared to guide his studies as he grew to manhood, he might, in some respects, have been a more thoroughly cultured and intellectually a stronger man. What God's purpose was for the lad it is not for us even now to say; yet, permitted as we are to know the facts of his subsequent career, and to understand the distinctive nature of his mission as it afterward unfolded, I must certainly regard the great bereavement he sustained in the loss of his father as the crucial point of his history, in which the elements of character hitherto prominent were fixed, and also the lines of action which afterward distinguished him took their rise. Alfred Cookman was endowed from a child with a genius for religion. His anointing was that of a spiritual seer—to see with the spirit into the innermost heart of spiritual Christianity,

and from such seeing to lead men's minds into depths of a vital and blessed experience of the things of God, to which mere reason and even ordinary piety has no access. As the poet, by an endowment which transcends cold logic, pierces the core of things and opens their realities to the untutored mind—makes the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dull to feel beauties otherwise hidden—so he, by a divine gift above the processes of the understanding, was to know the truths of the great Teacher, perceive their highest religious relations, and then to stand as interpreter of God's work in the soul, so that multitudes, blinded by the dust and engrossed with the cares of the world, might come to perceptions and attainments to which but for such an interpreter they must forever have remained ignorant.

I look upon this great trial, therefore, as beginning at once the special work of which he was to be a pre-eminent example and instrument. He was to be an unworldly, sacred man, and God commenced with the stroke which cut him away from the strongest earthly support he had. Accustomed hitherto to lean on his father—now mother, brothers, sister, all lean on him; and he, poor boy, has none to lean on but God! Once again he was "all alone with Jesus." He had been taught that God is the only sure foundation of His children, and now he must prove it for himself by experience or perish. He did prove it; and at that early age began to show a ripeness of wisdom, a steadiness of purpose, an unselfishness, a goodness, faith, courage, which were far beyond his years. His mother testifies beautifully to his conduct at this period:

"He was only thirteen years old when his dear father left us on a visit to his native land, the sequel of which proved so disastrous to a large, helpless family; but which, notwithstanding, brought out in all their force and power what had been until now the germs of Alfred's character. He realized his position as the oldest of six children, and faithfully tried to fill up the chasm made by a wise, though inscrutable Providence. Eter-

nity alone will unfold all he was to his family as a son and as a brother in the years of his minority."

There is an old story told of a runaway Indian slave in Peru, who, in his escape, fleeing up the mountains from his pursuers, grasped a young sapling, and, clinging to it, tore it from the ground—when lo! he saw adhering to its roots the silver globules which revealed the precious metals of Potosi. That sapling was never planted again. It might have become the great tree, its branches a roost for the birds of the air, and its leaves a shade for man and beast; but in its destruction the untold wealth of Peru had been discovered. The rude hand of disappointment tore from Alfred Cookman's heart the support of a father's love, and the tender leaves and flowers of hope which clustered around it; but in doing so discovered to him a wealth of love far richer than silver and gold. His hold on the earthly father was broken, but his hold on the heavenly Father was made firm and indissoluble. In the wealth he gained, and the world through him, who shall mourn if the flowers, which might have been so fair, lie withered at the feet of his youth?

Soon after her husband's departure for England, Mrs. Cookman had gone, by invitation, with her children to the eastern shore of Maryland, where they were all to remain the guests of Mr. Samuel Harrison, until the husband's return in June, when they were to remove to New York City. Her stay was prolonged till the month of August. Since up to this time no information was received as to the fate of Mr. Cookman, and the prospect of his return was well-nigh abandoned, she began to cast about for the best thing to be done for the immediate future. From the grandfather and kindred in England the most urgent requests were received that she should at once take her children to England. Indeed, they wrote as though there could be no other course open to her. They were well able to provide for them, and her pecuniary means were exceedingly limited. Nothing would have been more natural than for Mrs.

Cookman to accept this offer—alone as she was among comparative strangers, with no relatives near, and knowing, as she did, that the resources at Hull were so ample; but she decided not to go. She had left home for life; her children had been born in America, and Americans they should be reared. "She would take two small rooms, and keep them all together around her, rather than all or any part of them should return to England." Such was the language this heroic lady held to her friends across the water, and nothing could move her from her purpose. Mr. John Plaskitt, an Englishman residing in Baltimore City, and long known as the head of the firm of Plaskitt & Armstrong, booksellers and stationers, a prominent Methodist, and an intimate friend of the husband, with other gentlemen, rented a small house on Mulberry Street, near the Eutaw Street Methodist Church; and to it the family removed in the autumn.

Mrs. Cookman and Alfred united with the Eutaw Street Church. The children who were old enough were entered at the Eutaw Street Sunday-school, and also at day schools. Alfred, at different times for the next few years, was under the instruction of Messrs. Robert H. Pattison, Perley R. Lovejoy, and John H. Dashiell—all recently students of Dickinson College—and of a Mr. Burleigh. At Mr. Burleigh's school on one occasion he took several prizes—for elocution, an essay on simplicity, exercises in Latin, etc. He began thus early to attract attention as a speaker and writer. Mr. Robert Armstrong, then superintendent of the Eutaw Street Sunday-school, noticed his aptitude for public speaking, and was accustomed to put him up to address the boys' department of the school. His first original declamation was on the American Indian, in which the richness of his fancy and the force and gracefulness of his elocution were already apparent.

The following letter from the grandfather shows the truiy parental solicitude with which he regarded the widow and the children of his late son; and the reply from Alfred affords us

an example of his dutifulness, and some account of his doings and progress.

From Mr. George Cookman, of Hull, to Alfred, his grandson:

"HULL, April 5, 1842.

"MY DEAR ALFRED,—I received three days ago the letter of your dear mother, sent off in February, and had a fearful presentiment of her recent affliction, as her letter of the 27th of December never came to hand. I am, however, very thankful that she is so much recovered; and I trust, as the spring advances, she will regain her wonted health. I am quite as well as I can expect to be at my advanced age, and feel a most lively interest in the comfort and happiness of your dear family. I look to you, my dear Alfred, as an important coadjutor with your dear mother in forming the habits and character of your family; and it gives me inexpressible pleasure to learn, from your dear mother's letter, that there is every reason to hope that my expectations in this respect will be fully realized. Rest assured that you will be looked up to by the younger branches of the family, and in setting them a good example—in cheerfully obliging your dear mother, in promptly and affectionately obeying her commands, and in sympathizing with her under the pressure of family trials and bereavements—you will greatly lighten her burdens, alleviate her sufferings, and minister, in no inconsiderable degree, to her peace, comfort, and happiness.

"I hope you pay unremitting attention to your education. Your dear father, when about your age, was very attentive and diligent in the cultivation of his mind; he read much, and kept a commonplace-book, into which he copied from the authors which he read such passages as he thought the most striking, either as to sentiment or language; and by adopting this plan he very much improved his style in composition and his taste. He also began at the same time to write short essays on different subjects, as trials of his intellectual strength; and resolutely struggled with and overcame those difficulties which, if not mastered, are often fatal to mental improvement. It was by his unremitting perseverance in these pursuits that he formed his graceful and chaste style of composition, and which in after-life enabled him to write with such facility and dispatch.

"Allow me, my dear grandson, to urge you to follow the example of your dear departed father in the cultivation of your mind at this period of your life, for your future acquirements will very much depend upon an early development of your mental faculties. It was by adopting this course that your dear uncle Alfred became so distinguished, both at home among his friends, as well as when he was a student at the University. I trust their

mantle will fall upon you, my dear boy, and that you will emulate their talents and virtues—and like them secure the respect and admiration of your friends, and largely contribute to the happiness of mankind. I am glad to find that the portrait of your dear father is, upon the whole, as good as could be expected under all the circumstances in which we were placed; we did our best to get it as faithful and correct a likeness as we possibly could; and many of his friends here, judging of him by what he was when he left England, think it a striking likeness. We should, however, have been better pleased if the portrait had been more perfect. The Rev. Mr. Suddards dined with me on the 31st of March, and has been most obligingly kind in giving us every important information in his power, both with regard to your dear father, and all the members of your dear family. I feel under great obligations to him for the sympathy and affectionate regard which he has so uniformly and generously manifested, both to the memory of my late dear son and also to his family. I owe him a debt of gratitude which I can never pay—but our good Lord, I trust, will reward him a hundred-fold for his work of faith and labor of love in behalf of our family.

"You will please to give my kind love to your dear mother, to George, and all the younger branches of your family; give dear little Mary a kiss for her grandfather."

From Alfred to his grandfather:

"BALTIMORE, August 27, 1842.

"MY DEAR GRANDFATHER,—Your letter has remained unanswered longer than I had intended when it was first received. The reason why I did not answer it sooner was because I was very much engaged with my school duties, and during my vacation, when I might have written, I was in Washington. I hope you will excuse me.

"Mother has been improving in her health since last March. She has not been as well as usual for two weeks past. She is quite a miracle to herself and to all her friends, to be able to do what she does, considering how feeble she was. The warm weather always agrees better with her than the cold.

"I thank you for the kind advice which you give me in your letter. Rest assured, my dear grandfather, that it shall always be my first aim to comply with the wishes of dear mother, and in every way in my power to make her happy, for I deeply appreciate the obligations I am under to her: in sickness and health, she is always the same tender, kind, and affectionate mother. I am very much pleased with the plan you gave me of my dear father's method of improvement. I shall try to pursue it, but with how much success I know not. I have been in the habit of writing short essays

on different subjects, and have found it very improving. I have been spending my vacation in Washington, and had an opportunity of attending the debates of Congress. I also attended a camp-meeting about sixteen miles from Washington. There were about one hundred and thirty tents on the ground, and about one hundred persons professed to be converted. We had a delightful time. I enjoyed myself very much.

"The treaty with Lord Ashburton has been amicably settled, and the people generally seem pleased. I got a sight of him one day in his carriage.

"I am connected here with the Sabbath-school. I have a class of eight small boys, whom I take a great delight in teaching. I am also connected with the McKendrean Juvenile Missionary Society, who have appointed me secretary. I am also secretary of the Asbury Juvenile Temperance Society of Baltimore. So you see I have plenty to do.

"The temperance cause is making rapid strides in this city and elsewhere. The Hon. T. F. Marshall, who is a reformed drunkard, has become one of its most powerful advocates. He is a man of fine talents, and excels as a public speaker. My brothers are all well. I wish, my dear grandfather, we could all see you and you could see us, and give us your valuable advice in person. We often look at your likeness hanging on the wall, and try to bring you before us. I hope you will continue your correspondence with me occasionally, and suggest plans that I may profit by. I resume my school duties to-morrow, for which I am very glad. I shall try to make the best of my time now, for I suppose I shall soon have to turn my attention to business. Mother says the next year will probably be my last for regular study. * * *

Here also are letters of a year later from George and Alfred to their grandfather. They were written on one sheet of paper, and already exhibit the dawn of that loving brotherhood which grew with their growth in maturer years. Pretty plucky American boys, to write thus of Independence day to their English sire! Like many others, our young orator began fairly to fledge on the Fourth of July.

From George to his grandfather:

"BALTIMORE, July 27, 1843.

"MY DEAR GRANDFATHER,—I have for some time past been wondering how I could make a letter interesting to you, and now I think I have succeeded in gaining my object. In the first place, I wish to tell you how we spent the 4th of July, the anniversary of our country's independence. The

Sunday-school to which we belong assembled about 7 o'clock in the morning, and started from the school-house. We arrived at the place of destination about 8 o'clock. It was a beautiful grove, about a mile from the city. Our exercises commenced with singing and prayer, after which the children played for about an hour. We then again met at the stand, and, after singing and prayer, the Declaration of Independence was read. Alfred, who was the orator of the day, rose and spoke an original oration. There were several addresses and dialogues by the boys. We had a plentiful repast, and about 4 o'clock returned to the city, highly delighted by the exercises of the day. Alfred gave us some very good advice on patriotism, temperance, and duty to parents, and various other subjects. He was highly applauded for his youthful effort. At an exhibition of his school about a week ago, six judges awarded him the first prize for declamation. Our school broke up last Friday for the August holidays. I expect to start for the country in a day or two, where I hope to have a fine time in the various amusements of the country. I wish mother would move in the country rather than live in a crowded city.

"Your affectionate grandson,

"GEORGE COOKMAN."

From Alfred to his grandfather:

"BALTIMORE, July 27, 1843.

"MY DEAR GRANDFATHER,—At the request of dear mother, I purpose writing you a short letter on matters and things in general. For the last month I have had my time very much occupied in writing, committing, and delivering speeches, which I do assure you is no very easy task. On the 4th of July last, at the request of the teachers of the Eutaw Sabbath-school, I assembled with them in a most delightful grove, for the purpose of addressing them on the very interesting theme of the emancipation of our beloved America from the weight of British laws and British subjection—of the glorious 4th of July, 1776, when we declared ourselves a free and independent people, and to which day every true American ought to recur with feelings of veneration and patriotism. After numerous addresses and a plentiful repast, the children repaired to their respective homes highly delighted; and their only complaint was that the 4th of July did not come often enough for them. During the past year I have been going to a Mr. Burleigh's school, and have devoted almost all my time to the study of the ancient and modern languages. I think that the last year has added very much to my stock of information on various subjects. On the 20th of July Mr. Burleigh had an exhibition. About twenty-three of his scholars took part in the exercises; eight of that number had original speeches. I chose,

as the subject of my remarks, "Simplicity." I also delivered a short speech in French. After the speaking was over, the premiums were awarded to those deserving of them in the different classes. I received a handsome silver goblet, a small but neat silver cup, and two most interesting books. Our audience consisted of about fourteen hundred persons, who left the hall extremely gratified with the exercises. About three months ago a number of moral and intellectual youths formed themselves into a society for the purpose of self-improvement. Myself and George have the honor to be of the number. We meet every Friday evening. Our exercises consist of composition, declamation, and debate. Already do I find the good that accrues to me from being connected with this association; the misty clouds of ignorance which before gathered around me are beginning to disperse before the genial rays of the sun of science, and I trust before long to walk in the broad daylight of learning and intelligence. The influenza is raging to a very great extent in the city. Scarcely can you enter a house but some of the inmates are not suffering with it. * * * We are very anxious for mother to move into the country a short distance, say one and a half or two miles. We see every day more and more the demoralizing influence of crowded cities in bringing up youth, and particularly so in Baltimore. I have not been in any city or town, nor do I believe there is any, where the youth are so depraved in their character and vicious in their habits as in Baltimore. * * * But I am getting beyond my bounds. Tell cousin George R. I should be glad to hear from him."

I have before me a copy of the Fourth of July oration. It is creditable alike to the head and the heart of its youthful author. It is well conceived and well expressed, showing the elevation of thought and principle, the patriotic and religious fire which thus early animated him. In the same composition-book, in his neat handwriting, are translations from the Greek and Latin, and original essays, which give evidence of a vigorous intellect already well advanced in culture.

CHAPTER VI.

ALFRED, THE CHRISTIAN WORKER.—ESSAYS AT PREACHING.

HARMONIOUSLY with his intellectual progress, Alfred's moral and spiritual character was also growing. Mrs. Cookman, to satisfy her own yearnings for usefulness, to gratify the incessant demands for her counsel and society, and to obtain relief for her mind by activity, was much from home. She literally went about doing good—visiting the sick, needy, and penitent, attending social and religious meetings; and thus her heart was diverted, in a measure, from her great sorrow, and she was able to maintain a degree of health and cheerfulness. All this while Alfred was a keeper at home. He would urge her out, and volunteer to remain and take care of the children. Of an evening he could be seen, with his little brothers surrounding a large table, superintending their studies, helping them forward in their next day's tasks. Oftentimes the mother would return home weary, and she would say, "Come, children, we must have prayers before we go to bed;" and the quick response would be, "Mother, we have had prayers; Alfred has held prayers with us." At this age he showed habits of system and neatness which always followed him. His little room was a pink of tidiness; his bed, his books, his table, his clothes, all were kept in the nicest order, and he punctually observed the hours of coming and going assigned him by his mother. Could a better testimony be given to a son than the following from the pen of his mother?

"There are very few who could fully estimate the love and sympathy of such a mere youth as Alfred was when I was left

without the strong arm I had been accustomed to lean upon. He turned at once into the path of a wise and steady counselor, both to myself as well as to his brothers. He tried to share every burden and supply every loss which an apparent adverse Providence had laid upon us. In the deep anguish of a stricken heart, he would say, 'Dear mother, let the event be as it may, it is all right, and will turn out for the best; our heavenly Father disposes of all events, and He can not err in any of His dealings with His children.' Alfred did almost exclusively direct and control the studies of his brothers, unite with them in their various pursuits, and guard them from influences that might have been prejudicial but for his timely warnings; and yet there was no austerity in his admonitions; a spirit of consideration and kindness ever marked his efforts. He was remarkably constant in the path of obedience both toward God and in his Church relations. His class-meeting was never neglected. His attendance at the Sabbath-school, first as a scholar and then as a teacher, was constant; and so marked was his conduct as to induce the superintendent to request him to address his youthful companions on the importance of yielding their hearts to the blessed Saviour, and this before he was fifteen years of age."

Although he was naturally thoughtful, and the care prematurely devolved upon him tended to sadden his spirits, it must not be inferred that he was at all gloomy or despondent. On the contrary, he was one of the liveliest of boys, full of fun and cheerful gayety; he was always ready for a gambol with his brothers and his neighbors. He was a great favorite with his young companions. Known to be a ready writer, nothing was more common than for all the girls around to wish him to write their valentines.

The first public religious exercise which Alfred conducted was "to lead a class-meeting," when about sixteen years of age. A Mr. Childs had requested him to lead his class. The class

met in a private house. The mother, in her great desire to hear him conduct it without embarrassing him by her presence, concealed herself behind a side stair-way, and so listened to all the exercises. His opening hymn, which he read and sang, was,

"Talk with us, Lord."

After a struggle of two years, Mrs. Cookman received the blessing of the perfect love of God, which removed her despondency and restored her former cheerfulness. While communing at Eutaw Street Church, the Holy Spirit applied Christ's words, "His blood was shed for thee," with such force and sweetness as to fill her soul with peace, and to give her complete victory over all her fears. Henceforth she walked in the light of the Lord. This occurrence was very important, not only for herself, but also for the active work she was doing in the churches, and most of all for the duties which she owed to her family. In 1844 the new and beautiful Charles Street Methodist Episcopal Church was dedicated. The trustees cordially offered Mrs. Cookman a pew, and the family found a warm welcome in the bosom of this young Church, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Edwin Dorsey, M.D. To be more convenient to the church, they removed to a house on Lexington Street. In the associations here Alfred's activity rapidly developed. His talents and piety were soon recognized, and he found every encouragement to their exercise.

Early in this year Alfred and George received a letter from their grandfather. It is so good that I can not refrain from inserting it entire.

From the grandfather Cookman to Alfred and George:

"HULL, STEPNEY LODGE, January 27, 1844.

"MY DEAR ALFRED AND GEORGE,—I received with more than ordinary pleasure your letters of the 27th of July, and in reading them I could scarcely persuade myself but that time, by some mysterious revolution, had thrown back my life for at least five-and-twenty years, and that I was again read-

ing the pleasing letters of dear Alfred and George, my beloved sons. But, alas! the spell was soon broken by the painful recollections of the past. I am, however, delighted with your letters. The handwriting is very good; the composition, for your ages, is of a superior order; and, if you continue to prosecute your studies and exercises with unremitting perseverance, I have no doubt but you will, in your day, be the fac-similes of those whose endearing names you bear. * * * Let me entreat you, my dear grandchildren, to minister in every way in your power to the tranquillity, comfort, and happiness of a mother whose maternal care and solicitude for the welfare of her family have been as unremitting as her love has been pure and ardent. I was delighted to hear of your attainments as scholars, and of the very handsome manner in which your exercises were received by the audience at your public exhibition. You have, by these successful efforts, secured a prominent position in the estimation of the public; and if you should conclude from this circumstance that you may now relax your efforts in the prosecution of your studies, this elevation will be but the precursor of your fall. It is not enough to be considered the first among boys: you must look forward and aspire to be the first among your citizens. But this can not be attained but by unremitting industry. Decision of character is therefore indispensable in all important undertakings, and I have no doubt of your ultimate success if you are determined to excel. You are, I hope, proceeding with your learning in a systematic and methodical order, and making yourselves thoroughly masters of one branch of science before you enter upon another. This is indispensable, as this is the basis of all after-improvements in learning.

"I am glad to find that you have become members of a literary society, and have no doubt but it will be of great service to you. Your dear father and uncle had the same privilege, and they often surprised me by the papers they produced and the speeches they delivered on the questions discussed at their weekly meetings. Mixing with members of superior acquirements, they obtained a great increase of knowledge, and also obtained an easy and graceful mode of public speaking. There is, however, *some danger* growing out of these institutions, against which I would most urgently caution you. The questions for discussion have seldom any connection with each other, and this necessarily induces a desultory and careless course of reading and of thought. Now the danger to be apprehended is this: that you will seek applause in the forum rather than in the academy, and fall into a dislike of the study of those dryer branches of learning which require greater mental application and labor, and the mastery of which is essential to your becoming proficients in sound learning. Above all things of this life, seek first

the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and leave the rest to the good pleasure of your Heavenly Father." * * *

From Alfred to his grandfather Cookman:

"BALTIMORE, March 22, 1845.

"MY DEAR GRANDFATHER,—This day's mail has brought to hand a letter from Aunt Mary Ann, which has been the first to break the long-continued silence which has reigned for some months. In the perusal of her letter we were not a little gratified to learn that you still enjoy your accustomed health, and are able to attend to all the concerns of domestic life. Believing that it would afford you pleasure to hear from us, I have sat down and will write a few lines on what we would call the leading topics of the day.

"Well, in what condition are we as a country? What have we done, and what are we doing? I think we may with propriety be compared to the ocean: we have had the storm, and now the calm is beginning to succeed. For the last few months we have as a nation been torn with party strife, for from the tiny school-boy as well as the gray-headed old man have been heard sentiments, together with enthusiastic shouts, in honor of some favorite partisan. Meetings have been held frequently at which vast concourses of people have assembled, and where the talent of the country have been present to display their forensic powers. However, although I am favorable to party spirit where it can be kept within bounds, believing that it tends to keep alive a spirit of inquiry in the minds of the people in regard to those subjects connected with their country's welfare, yet when it reaches the height which it has here, and is productive of the same direful results, I, for one, would say, 'Subdue, and silence it.' It has been prostituted to the worst purposes. Men who have stood in our council-chambers, ever ready to second any effort that would conduce to the prosperity of the nation, and who, in very many instances, have been the originators of noble and useful measures, have had their characters defamed and their spotless reputations sullied and disgraced. But the evils of party spirit have not ended here. There has been the greatest amount of betting: thousands have been swallowed up in this greedy vortex, and, among a certain class of our citizens, that man who would bet the greatest amount has been considered a noble-hearted, generous fellow. At the large meetings of which I have spoken liquor has been used, occasioning drunkenness and riot. All these evils combined have presented to the virtuous and patriotic mind a sad and mournful picture.

"But the contest is over; the combatants have withdrawn from the field of party strife, and the champion of the victorious party has been awarded

the title of the President of the United States. All the various portions of society are beginning to turn their attention again to their daily avocations, and are bending all the energies of their minds toward amassing money or something else.

"The main question which now agitates our country is the subject of slavery. Not content with harassing us in our civil institutions, it has entered the borders of our Zion, and will, in all probability, effect a division. At our late session of Congress it was decreed to annex Texas to our Union. This, lying to the south of our Republic, and being itself a slave country, will be connected with Southern interests, who (the South) may insist on measures which may prove detrimental to the North, who, in turn, retaliating, may bring on that most-to-be-dreaded of all evils—civil war. Oh, grandfather, I regard the measure of Congress, in this point of view, as highly reprehensible. I believe that it will cast a dark stain on the fair escutcheon of our liberties, and that eventually it may prove the breaker on which the proud ship of state may be wrecked.

"In the Church a difficulty has arisen—whether it is in harmony with the spirit of Methodism for a bishop, who is called to all parts of the Union, to be the possessor of human property; and at the late session of the General Conference much time was spent on this question, which was finally decided in the negative. This decision has so enraged the Southern portion of the Church that they have declared that they will not submit to this (as they would term it) arbitrary measure, and they have called a General Conference, to be held in May next, to take steps toward division. What it will end in is for the future to develop. I trust that the Great Head of the Church will rule all things well; that He will adjust these difficulties, and bring all things to a happy termination. I had intended when I commenced my letter to be rather egotistic; but ideas on the subjects which I have alluded to have multiplied, and I have just recorded them. My next shall be more about myself and family. As we boys are accustomed to say, '*tempus et spatium*' fail me, and I must close."

The reader of these pages will readily forgive our young friend for his want of "egotism" in this letter, since more of him, as an observer of his times, is seen than any merely personal narrative could have given. It is evident that he was thoroughly alive to the stirring events of those days, in which party strife, both in State and Church, had reached the pitch that already foreboded the calamities into which the whole country was soon precipitated.

Thus at the age of seventeen he evinced a familiarity with public movements, a close sympathy with the welfare of the nation, and of the Church to which he belonged, which never forsook him. From this time onward he could be no indifferent citizen of the State or member of the Church. It was not in the nature of a soul so thoroughly human, and so richly imbued with the Master's spirit, to be a passive cipher in the midst of such active forces as those into which he was born and in which he grew up. It has been conjectured, in a most graphic delineation of his father, that the stirring, warlike spirit of Europe in the beginning of the nineteenth century, at the period of the father's birth, had much to do with his martial spirit as an orator. A heart more responsive to the weal of the nation and to the weal of the Church never throbbed than beat in the breast of Alfred Cookman; nor has there arisen among us a public man, whether in the pulpit or out of it, whose character was more affected by the reflected influence of these two objects. To those who knew so well the genuineness of his patriotism, and the unselfish zeal of his Methodism in later years, it is no unpleasant matter to get the peep at the early dawn of these two great passions which is afforded us by this letter. How like the temper of the perfected man, the sentiment, "I trust that the Great Head of the Church will rule all things well; that He will adjust these difficulties, and bring all things to a happy termination."

About this time, the year 1845, Alfred entered distinctively upon his evangelistic career; not, however, as a preacher, but as an earnest worker in Sabbath-school and missionary effort. A band of young men, most of whom were connected with the Charles Street Church, formed a mission to the seamen and poor children who frequented the upper docks of the harbor in Baltimore. Their hearts were touched with pity as they saw the large number of sailors, most of whom were confined to vessels doing business wholly in the waters of the Chesapeake Bay, and

who were back and forth very often, entirely destitute of the means of religious improvement. They first rented a small room at the head of Frederick Street Dock. This proving too limited, they removed to a more commodious and eligibly located one on Pratt Street, at the head of the Upper Basin. It was not the first time that Methodism began a good work in a "Sail Loft." The old Sail Loft, christened "the City Bethel," was the scene of the zealous labors of these devout young men on Sundays and week-day evenings. Alfred was the youngest among them, but not least in graces and gifts. He was so powerfully affected by the "Bethel Fraternity," then and always for the shape and for the friendships it gave him, and those who constituted this band of generous youths have since come to such repute, and the immediate object for which they labored has come to such stability, that I offer from the pen of the Rev. T. H. Switzer, the first pastor of the City Bethel, a circumstantial account of the matter:

"The Baltimore City Bethel was the second organization of the kind in the city, its object was to reach sailors, watermen, and neglected children, who loitered about the wharfs on the Sabbath-day. It was called City Bethel to distinguish it from the Sailors' Union Bethel, of Fell's Point, Baltimore.

"The first Seamens' Bethel had been organized many years previous, chiefly by aged and experienced Christians of different denominations. The City Bethel was the point of youthful devotion to the cause of Christ. A number of young men, aided by a few older brethren, with a commendable zeal and desire to do good, began to inquire what could be done for Sabbath-breaking boatmen and neglected indigent children; impelled by the same influence that moved the primitive preachers and reformers, they went out looking up the poor, neglected, and abandoned, and inviting them to a Sabbath-school and place of worship. The first year the society conducted its own meetings, assisted occasionally by a local or itinerant minister;

the Sabbath afternoons were devoted to experience meetings, where many testified to the goodness of God in saving them from the jaws of death and hell. At these meetings many were convicted and led to seek the Saviour. The place of worship was a room about twenty feet broad and forty or fifty feet deep, situated at the head of and overlooking the City Basin.

"In less than a year it was entirely too small to accommodate those who attended the Sabbath-schools and divine worship, and the society purchased and fitted up the old time-honored ship *William Penn*, capable of accommodating six hundred persons. Rev. J. A. Collins, presiding elder of the Baltimore District, assisted by other ministers, dedicated this ship to the service of God. The Bethel was safely moored in the Basin, its flag waving from the mast-head, and service was held three times on the Sabbath. The Bethel, though not a denominational institution, was chiefly managed by the young men of our Church; class-meetings were held regularly during the week, led by the pastor; Sabbath morning and evening the pulpit was filled by the preacher in charge, in the afternoon his place was supplied by ministers of different denominations—Dr. J. Morris (Lutheran), Dr. Johns (Episcopal), Dr. Kurtz (Lutheran), Dr. E. Y. Reese (Protestant Methodist), and others, participating in the services. Prayer-meetings were held on one or two evenings of each week. From that old ship many a sailor carried a flame of love for Jesus into distant lands, and many whose calling was on land will bless God for what has been done for them through the instrumentality of the young men of this Bethel. The members of the society held their membership in some one of the city stations, but most of them belonged to the Charles Street M. E. Church, then in charge of Dr. Dorsey.

"I distinctly remember the names of Samuel Kramer, Gershom Broadbent, Robert Dryden, Thomas Dryden, William H. Chapman, Adam Wallace, John Landstreet, William Prettyman, Thomas Worthington, Brother Cristy, Brother Armstrong, C.

J. Thompson, and Alfred Cookman. Brother Samuel Kramer deserves honorable mention in this connection; he was the oldest member of the association, and a local preacher; he devoted much of his time and attention to the spiritual and financial interests of the society, and this interest he kept up for many years. Brother Alfred Cookman, although the youngest, was one of the most active and efficient members of the society; at our regular monthly meetings to devise ways and means of advancing the interests of the association, he was always present, and took part in our deliberations and discussions. In the Sabbath-school, the experience meetings, and in the preaching of the Word, he manifested a lively interest. Soon after my appointment to the charge, an incident occurred which brought him particularly under my notice. Thomas Dryden, son of Joshua Dryden, after a protracted illness, fell asleep in Jesus. His death was deeply lamented by the society. His example was bright while he lived, and his death was signally triumphant. The friends of the deceased and members of the organization requested Brother Cookman to prepare a funeral discourse, which he did, and delivered in the lecture-room of the Charles Street Church. This was Alfred's first sermon, then in his seventeenth year. The discourse made a strong impression on the audience, and those present who are now living remember it to the present day. His call to the ministry was undoubted by those who heard him on that occasion.

"The sermon was delivered with much feeling, his enunciation was distinct, his language chaste and impressive, his illustrations forcible and appropriate; his pathetic allusions to the deceased touched the tender chords of the hearts of many present. Those who were familiar with his father's method, and the character of his preaching, could not fail to discover in the younger Cookman traits that reminded them of that eminent minister of Christ, George G. Cookman.

"Alfred Cookman was at that time modest and unobtrusive

in manner, ardent in his feelings. His judgment was in advance of his years, his imagination was vivid, and illustration was successfully employed in his themes. In person he was slender, and his genial countenance wore the cheerful glow of sunshine.

"The Bethel ship was subsequently abandoned, but not until a good, substantial church edifice was erected on shore, within a few rods of the wharf where she had been moored. Whatever changes time shall develop in the history of this Bethel Church, its origin must be traced to the labors of these devoted sons of the prophets; numbers now living, both laymen and ministers, remember with pleasure their connection with the City Bethel. With gratitude to God we allude to a number of these young men who became able ministers of the New Testament, among whom are Robert Pattison, C. J. Thompson, Adam Wallace, John Landstreet, William Harden, William Chapman, and Alfred Cookman."

The communication of Mr. Switzer has anticipated a little the fact which was to give direction to Alfred's future calling. From the incident of the funeral sermon, it is evident that an impression was already prevailing among his associates that he was "called to preach." His selection by those who knew him most intimately for so important a service for their departed associate, shows that they not only believed him called of God to preach, but also the high estimation in which they held both his talents and his piety. It was a great mark of respect to be put upon a youth of seventeen years. His text on the occasion was, "To die is gain." The general style and effect of the treatment have been described. The mind of the Church now distinctly pointed to him as a suitable person to preach the Gospel of Christ. The call to preach, among the Methodists, is regarded as a two-fold and simultaneous movement of the Holy Ghost upon the heart of the individual and upon the heart of the Church with which he is connected. However reserved

the person thus moved may be in withholding his impressions, the Church will be led, independently of any communication from him, to feel that he ought to take upon himself the office and work of the ministry. Many a young man who, in his modesty, has tried like Saul to hide himself among the stuff, ignorant that any one suspected his struggles of soul, has been drawn out of his hiding-place and thrust forth into the work. Such, too, has not unfrequently stood head and shoulders above his brethren.

The initial steps were taken in designating Alfred Cookman for the ministry November 1st, 1845, when he was licensed as an exhorter in the Methodist Episcopal Church by the official meeting of the Charles Street Station, Baltimore Conference, Edwin Dorsey preacher in charge. In less than a year from this time, on July 7th, 1846, he received from the Quarterly Conference of the same charge a license to preach, signed by the Rev. John A. Collins, as presiding elder. The preparation for the examination which he had to undergo before the Quarterly Conference was made wholly by himself. It was conducted very thoroughly by Mr. Collins, who, at its close, pronounced Alfred more proficient in the subjects comprised in the examination than any young man who had ever come before him for license. He was at this time an assistant teacher in a private academy; his work was arduous and confining, his social and religious engagements numerous, so that he must have studied diligently to attain such a clear understanding of the Scriptural proofs of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

George G. Cookman had thus early a successor in the ministry. Five years only had gone since the great light was quenched in the sea, and now in the person and office of the eldest born the work of illumination was to be continued. The deep emotions of the mother may be better imagined than expressed, as she saw her little Solomon recognized as God's chosen one, and designated by the Church to the great building to which

she had so sincerely consecrated him in childhood. To such a mother this hour for her first born was cause for richer joy and juster pride than if she had seen him selected for an earthly throne, or as the heir of the wealthiest man in the land. Of Alfred's own feelings at this important period of his career, but a limited statement is at command. In after years he made this reference to it: "At the age of eighteen I took up the silver trumpet which had fallen from the hand of my faithful father, and began to preach, in a very humble way, the everlasting Gospel." This allusion, and that found in the following letter to his grandfather, are enough to show the humility and earnestness with which he received the great commission. The letter also lets us into his anxious questionings as to his immediate future course. Its references to the late Rev. George C. M. Roberts, M.D., D.D., can not fail of grateful interest to the hosts of friends in Baltimore and elsewhere, who cherish with such affection and reverence the memory of that able and devout man. At once physician and local preacher, he ministered to the bodies and souls of thousands, and for the space of a quarter of a century wielded an influence in the community second to no other citizen.

From Alfred to his grandfather Cookman:

"BALTIMORE, July 7, 1846.

"A favorable opportunity for transmitting you a few lines has presented itself, inasmuch as Dr. Roberts, one of the most respected and esteemed members of our community, is about to depart for England, with the design of attending the World's Convention. This gentleman is a member of the medical profession in our city; in connection with this he is an official member in the Methodist Church, and has always evinced great zeal and energy in the promotion of every good and benevolent enterprise. I am sure that Baltimore possesses no son more highly esteemed and more generally loved than this brother, and it is on account of his noble and excellent qualities that he was unhesitatingly selected to represent the interests of what is termed "the city station" in this coming convention. He is a man of the deepest and most devoted piety, and an earnest anxiety for the prosperity

of Zion has prompted him to establish a Saturday-evening prayer-meeting, where Christians are accustomed to meet and pray, more especially for the sanctifying influences of God's spirit. At these meetings I have frequently been found, and have there eminently realized the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords. I am sure you will be pleased with him. Possessed of a sweet, Christian-like spirit, affable and winning manners, and no small share of intellect, he secures for himself the affection and good-will of all with whom he is called to associate.

"As you are aware, I have been engaged in teaching for the last twelve months. I have not realized those sanguine expectations that I indulged when I entered upon this arduous employment; for I confidently hoped to do more in the improvement of my mind, while engaged in teaching, than I could possibly if my entire time were devoted to literary pursuits. I thought that, while instructing youths, I should effect a review of old studies, and that between schools I could devote myself to mental labor or literary acquisition; but, alas! alas! my hopes have proved vain, and I have not reached that point in the hill of science whither my aspirations would have led me. The school in which I am engaged as assistant has been small, and made up principally of boys who were in the very first rudiments of science; and day after day my duties have been to hear the little urchin repeat his task either in spelling, geography, arithmetic, or some other minor branch, all of which it would be almost impossible to forget; and thus I, of course, have not realized my first expectation. Although these my scholars had progressed but little, though their attainments were but limited, I felt it to be my duty to devote myself with as much assiduity and energy to their improvement as if I had heard them every day recite an ode of Horace or a section of Homer. The consequence has been that, when after having performed my duties I have returned home and retired to my own study, I have experienced a general prostration of my entire system. My nerves have been unstrung, my energies paralyzed, and I have had no spirit to proceed with study. I must not, I can not consistently say, that I have made no additions to my stock during the year. Many theological works I have carefully perused, and think that I am pretty well grounded in the fundamentals of divinity. During the year I felt it to be my duty to assume a more responsible station, namely, that of a minister of the everlasting Gospel. Frequently I have stood up in the sacred desk to expound the oracles of God; and, in declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ, in dwelling upon the amazing love and infinite condescension of the Saviour in redemption, my own soul has been warmed, and I have realized that in dispensing the Gospel I receive much of Heaven's comfort.

"I have been seriously considering which would be the best course for me to pursue in the future. My engagements with Mr. L. will terminate in a few days, and I do not feel disposed to shackle myself for the coming year as I certainly have during the past. I have sought the counsel of some of my father's tried friends, as, for instance, Messrs. Hodgson, Durbin, Thompson, and others, and they advise me to enter the itinerant field, assuring me that I will not only have more time, but more disposition to study. I have calmly and dispassionately weighed this advice, and think it is good; that perhaps it would be to my advantage, in an intellectual point of view, as well as the consideration that, in the hands of God, I might be made useful."

Alfred's mother, in referring to his habits at this date of his life, says, "He very early threw in his efforts (with others) to work among a class of degraded human beings, who were drunkards, and were almost taken out of the gutters. His young voice was often heard in denunciation and earnest entreaties for them to turn from sin and become new men in Christ Jesus. With what zeal and earnestness did he follow these poor outcasts! Alfred was very exact in the distribution of his time. He had to depend, in a great measure, on his own efforts. He felt himself a fatherless youth, and had very ardent yearnings to acquire knowledge, and to prepare himself to fill a useful and honorable position in life. Thus he became a very diligent student in the various departments constituting a thorough scholar. In Latin, Greek, German, and French, he was very proficient, and his knowledge in the arts and sciences was considerable. Even at the age of twelve his father acknowledged he was farther advanced in those branches than he was himself at the age of eighteen. Humility and timidity were two of his peculiar characteristics, which kept him from any thing like display or assumption."

Subsequently to his license to preach, and before leaving Baltimore, he preached frequently. His friend, Mr. Samuel Kramer, a local preacher, would take him to his country appointments contiguous to the city, and would have him supply for him. All the opportunities he could desire, and more per-

haps than was prudent for so young a beginner, were opened to him. His engagements were constantly up to the full measure of his strength and his time. In the best pulpits of the city his services were accepted, and in the best society of the city his company was eagerly sought. The name he bore was hallowed to the people. They were prepared, for his father's and mother's sake, to listen to his words and to love his character. But he was every thing in himself that was attractive—one of the most engaging youths who ever stood in a sacred desk or moved among a circle of friends. There was a freshness and healthfulness of physique, an openness of physiognomy, a spiritual beauty, a ripeness of culture, a manifest piety, a gracefulness of movement, and a native eloquence which won all hearts; and from this early day until his death there was no minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church who could draw together a larger crowd of ardent, admiring hearers in the city of Baltimore than Alfred Cookman. A halo invested him from the beginning to the end of his career.

CHAPTER VII.

THE YOUTHFUL PASTOR.—HIS FIRST CIRCUIT.

BUT the time had now come when plans for the more regular and permanent exercise of his ministry began seriously to agitate him. We have already seen from his last letter that thoughts of a collegiate course had been entertained and discussed. It appears that the counsels of his father's closest friends were adverse to this, and favorable to an immediate entrance upon the itinerant ministry.

The question may have come to others as to myself: Why did not Mrs. Cookman settle in Carlisle after the death of her husband, where she could have had for her sons the training of Dickinson College? She had lived there—cherished many pleasant memories of the town and its people—had a scholarship of five hundred dollars—and it was proposed to her to go there; but her health was too feeble to allow it. When residing there she was nearly disabled by the climate, and she could not venture to live in it again. Why, then, did she not send Alfred? Simply because her purpose was fixed not to separate her children while they were in process of education. She wished them all at home, and at that time she needed Alfred as really as he needed her. She thought and acted for herself in the matter. She was afraid to trust her boy at college away from her, and since she could not accompany him, it was decided he must do the best he could with such facilities as Baltimore afforded. Mrs. Cookman honored learning much, but she reverenced goodness more. She may have taken counsel of her fears, but the wisdom of her decision none can presume to question till the records of the son's life are unfolded in eternity.

Certainly the results of his ministry are not such as to leave room for many regrets on the ground of greater possible usefulness. What he was we know; what he might have been with the influences of the broader culture which comes of the studies and associations of the college we can not fully conjecture. A more liberal education, prosecuted at greater length, would probably have rendered him different, in some respects, from what he was as a man and as a preacher, but it is extremely doubtful if it could have rendered him more intense in his personal and ministerial influence. In the cry for scholars, we are too apt to forget that it is not so much ideas as their application; not so much new truths as the practice of old truths; not so much thinkers as actors—men of deeds—that the great world needs. A man to move and mould the people must be a man of positive convictions, be the circle of his knowledge never so small, rather than a critical investigator.

Alfred Cookman was capable of becoming a scholar of a high order, but he chose to narrow the sphere of his studies to the subjects which nourished his own soul satisfactorily, which he felt would make him most useful as a pastor, and it was the thoroughness with which his intellect grasped these, and the heartiness with which he believed them, that gave him in his domain so marked an ascendency over the minds of the people. So that I am frank to acknowledge that if a collegiate education (taking education in its multiplex sense) would have made his ministry different from what it was, I can scarcely see how it could have made it more useful. I fear the contrary might have been the result. Upon the whole, it is quite safe to assume, where the sincerest efforts are made by those who have the shaping of Christ's chosen instruments, that their course is about such as God orders, and in the outcome is the best for them and for His Church.

The point being settled that the young evangelist should at once make full proof of his ministry by entering the regular pastorate, the next question for decision was, "What conference

shall he join?" Some of his friends urged him strongly to seek admission into the Baltimore Conference, while others as strongly urged the advantages of the Philadelphia. It would have been natural for him to remain where he was, but the reasons for going to Philadelphia were controlling. His former and much-beloved teacher, the Rev. Robert Pattison, had joined that conference; several of his young associates, such as Charles J. Thompson and Adam Wallace, preferred it; his father had first united with it, and he wished, as far as possible, to follow in his footsteps.

But, as usual, the mother's judgment turned the scales. There were better schools and better opportunities of business in Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania was a free state. Her repugnance to slavery made her adverse to rearing her children in contact with it. There was another consideration which weighed with her possibly more than all others: she felt the time had come when she must give herself more fully to the care of her children. So numerous and pressing were her social and religious engagements, that she found it quite impossible to impart the instruction and sympathy which their increasing years demanded. She was expected to be prominent in every benevolent movement of the ladies, to attend all their prayer-meetings, to be present at their social entertainments—indeed, to be foremost in every good word and work, and with only very limited means at her command; to superintend personally a large family of children, all of whom were boys but the youngest—these must be paragons of neatness, propriety, and intelligence—and she must be universal mother and sister in the fellowship of joy and in the fellowship of pain to all who needed her counsel or sought her sympathy. It could not be: she must go back again to the old position, when she elected to fashion men rather than to be a missionary. While, therefore, her heart was deeply attached to Baltimore and to its loving, noble Christians, she determined that, for her family's sake, she must cut herself loose from their

companionship, and seek, in another city and amid new scenes, to enter upon a course of more exclusive devotion to home nurture.

Early in the autumn of 1846 the household goods were stored in a canal-boat and shipped to Philadelphia. The family soon followed, and within a few weeks were snugly at housekeeping on Race Street, between Tenth and Eleventh Streets. Alfred had already been requested by the Rev. James McFarland, presiding elder of one of the Philadelphia districts, to supply the place of Rev. D. D. Lore, who had been appointed missionary to Buenos Ayres, on Attleboro Circuit, Bucks County, under the charge of the Rev. James Hand. He accepted the invitation, and so soon as the family were settled, and he had procured the necessary outfit, he started for the "appointment." His horse he named "Gery," in honor of his friend Gershom Broadbent of Baltimore. Gery became a great pet with him and with all the brothers and the little sister. Alfred and Gery were much talked about at home, and their joint arrival on a visit was henceforth hailed as the brightest day which could dawn on Philadelphia. Many were the caresses which Gery got from little Mary, and George, Frank, Will, and John were not slow to test the mettle of their brother's faithful companion.

It was a proud hour when the young preacher, leaving his mother's door, with her blessing on his head and her warm kiss upon his lips, springing into his saddle, hied away over the hills to his first pastoral charge. What a pang it must have cost him to part with that loving parent, to leave brothers and sister, who had clung to him as a father, and to go off among total strangers! But though young, and sensitive even to feminine delicacy, he had the hopes of youth to cheer him. His heart was full of zeal for the Master's glory, and the romantic interest which belongs to an earnest nature in the first commencement of a chosen and chivalrous career. On the mother's part, his devotement to the work was one of pure self-sacrifice; and

as she saw him ride away, in the first act which was forever to take him from her roof, the light went out of her eyes and the joy from her heart. But she made the surrender cheerfully, thanking God that He had "counted him worthy—putting him into the ministry." She could not, however, let him go without salutary advice—advice which he never forgot, and which became a watch-cry in his ministry. Here is his reference to the occasion: "Quitting about this time one of the happiest of homes to enter the itinerant work, my excellent mother remarked just upon the threshold of my departure, 'My son, if you would be supremely happy or extremely useful in your work, you must be an entirely sanctified servant of Jesus.' It was a cursory suggestion, perhaps forgotten almost as soon as expressed; nevertheless, applied by the Spirit, it made the profoundest impression upon my mind and heart. Oh, the value of single sentences which any one may utter in the ordinary intercourse of life! Sermons and exhortations are frequently forgotten, while the wish or counsel simply and precisely expressed will abide, to lead us into clearer light. Let this fact, which will find an illustration in many experiences, serve to stimulate and encourage even the feeblest to speak for Jesus. My mother's passing but pointed remark followed me like a good angel as I moved to and fro in my first sphere of itinerant life."

To Alfred the parting advice of his mother seemed only like a cursory remark, but it was cursory only in its natural and unstudied utterance. Such counsel dropped from her lips as the ripe fruit at a chance moment from the tree, or sweetness exhales from the flower. "The best thoughts do not come to us except gradually." This thought of Mrs. Cookman was the condensed experience of years, and, packed in a single maxim, it fell gently into the ear and heart of the son. In this seed-truth was germinally the whole substance and form of what she meant and wished his life to be—the utmost usefulness and happiness as branches, foliage, and fruits growing on the stock

of holiness. In the first sphere and in the last of his itinerant life, that parting advice followed him. The Spartan matron charged her sons, when going to battle, to come back with their shields or to be brought back on them. Alfred Cookman never parted with the shield his mother gave him; he went into and returned from many battles with it, and when at length he fell, it is evident that on it he was borne to heaven.

Attleboro Circuit lay among the hills of Bucks County, Pa., and embraced in its territory a fine rural district. It obliged a good deal of traveling and much hard work from the youthful minister. The social status of Methodism was not so high as he had been accustomed to in the cities, and, although he met with great kindness from the people, he missed many comforts which he had hitherto deemed quite necessary to his well-being. But he shrunk from no duty, however hard, and no work which lay in his way. Among the youths whom he had found on removing to Philadelphia was Andrew Longacre, now the Rev. Andrew Longacre, of the New York Conference. They soon felt themselves to be kindred spirits, and very speedily there sprang up between them a friendship which grew closer with maturing years, and has constituted one of the most profitable and lovely of human attachments. Andrew was younger by three years, but Alfred gave him his whole heart. The following letter is a proof of this affection, and also a fair exhibit of the circuit life. It discloses to us the dutiful service he was ready to render as a "junior preacher," the fidelity with which amid bodily ailments he stood to his post, and also the zest with which, though now a grave minister, he could enter into the pleasantries of his young friend:

"NEW TOWN, February 22, 1847.

"MY DEAR FRIEND ANDREW, — I had intended to reply to your interesting and affectionate letter some days since, but circumstances have been of a character to prevent me. Not only have I had the duties of a protracted meeting devolving upon me, but within the last few days I have

necessarily been obliged to travel a good deal, in compliance with the wishes of my colleague. On Friday last, in conjunction with his expressed desire, I procured a covered wagon and a pair of horses, and, assisted by a teamster, proceeded to bring a table that had been constructed in New Hope to this village, the place of its destination. The distance is about twelve miles, and the road being exceedingly bad, owing to the continued wet weather, we were about three hours in accomplishing the journey. During the day I got my feet very wet, and on my return was so thoroughly chilled that I apprehended a severe cold. My surmises proved but too true, for, after passing a rather disagreeable night—my slumbers being disturbed—I rose in the morning threatened with my old complaint. I had promised the day previous that I would return to New Town, and, if necessary, would endeavor to preach on Saturday evening in Attleboro. Not willing to sacrifice my word, I very imprudently again left New Hope in an open sulky, and with great difficulty reached New Town, when I was obliged to alight and lie down. I found, from the state of my feelings, that it would be impracticable and impossible for me to proceed any farther. Debility and pain seemed to have seized my entire system, and I was sick—*very sick*. My colleague came in, and very kindly consented to put away and take charge of my horse, and thought, from my symptoms, that I should at once see a doctor. He soon arrived, dosed me with laudanum and castor-oil, said he would call again, and hoped that I would soon be better. In the unbounded mercy and undeserved goodness of my Heavenly Father, I have been almost entirely restored; and though I feel a little debilitated and suffer a little pain, yet still I hope very soon again to plunge into the battle and fight valiantly for my God.

"But what am I doing? Here I have filled up a page and a half with an account of the state of my physical system: something that must be as uninteresting as unprofitable to you. Since I left my Philadelphia friends (friends that I regard with feelings of peculiar tenderness), I have almost constantly been engaged in active service for my Master. Almost every evening has found me upon the battle-plain, surrounded by a devoted few, and arrayed against the armies of the aliens. My ear has been saluted not by the clash of arms, the roar of cannon, the shrieks of the wounded and dying, but, thank God, by something infinitely sweeter, nobler, and more delightful. Night after night I have heard the sweet hymn of praise gushing warm from the Christian's grateful heart; the fervent and importunate prayer from him hungering and thirsting after righteousness; the hearty exclamation, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner,' from him who regarded sin as a burden too intolerable to be borne; the transporting accent trembling upon the lips of the newly regenerated creature, 'Glory! Glory! I *do* love Jesus,

for He has taken my feet from the mire and the clay, and He has planted them on the rock of ages.' I praise the Lord for what I have enjoyed in my own soul; the flame of heaven's love has been burning brightly upon the altar of my heart, and these circumstances to which I have made allusion, viz., the conversion of my fellow-mortals, has been like fuel thrown upon the fire to add to the power and brilliancy of the flame. I often look at myself, Andrew, and when I call to mind my manifold shortcomings and repeated backslidings, when I remember my constant wanderings, both to the right hand and to the left, I am lost in wonder and astonishment that my Saviour should be so kind and good as to lavish upon me such unnumbered and undeserved blessings, that He should choose me as one of His creature instruments to extend the honor of the Redeemer's name, I need and earnestly desire to love Him more and serve Him better, to have every power of my nature consecrated upon the altar of His cause; in a word, to be sanctified throughout, soul, body, and spirit; for I verily believe that, if we would be eminently useful as well as supremely happy, we must love God with all our soul, mind, and strength. I certainly should feel very happy if I thought I had so secured your confidence as to prompt you feelingly and conscientiously to array my poor unworthy self with so many noble and excellent qualities. Perhaps that sentence was penned, like many of my own, from impulse, for I am sure that were you to bestow upon me the least scrutiny, my deformities, physical, mental, and moral, would induce you to start back astonished. One thing, though, is perfectly certain. I love my friends, and I covet their esteem and regard.

"You inquire with regard to the number of valentines transmitted and received by myself—if less than a hundred, you require the exact number; if more, a general estimate. Now, Andrew, take out your Arithmetic, and refer to the numeration table. Are you ready? If so, commence; but take care not to proceed with units, tens, and hundreds, but rather go the other way, and when you reach the enormous and inconceivable quantity of '*none*,' you shall be pronounced correct. Yes, Andrew, I received *none*. Had I possessed all those peculiar characteristics which your friendly epistle would seem to indicate, I am almost sure that some fair hand would have penned a declaration of esteem and love. You inquire if I regard it as sinful. Certainly not. I look upon it as perfectly innocent, an amusement that all may indulge in without incurring a sense of condemnation, if the valentines are only of the proper kind."

All who remember the expression of genuine modesty which Alfred Cookman's face always wore, will appreciate the self-

deprecating reference with which he meets his friend's tribute to his personal qualities. I can almost see the girlish blush which mantles his youthful brow at the mention of these excellences. But the feature of this first letter in his ministerial life which is most significant is the ardent breathings which it manifests for entire consecration to God. The leaven of his mother's advice was already working. Circumstances were close at hand which were distinctly to impress his whole subsequent career. In the providence of God he was thus early brought into contact with influences which gave definitive shape to his views and experiences on the great doctrine which was henceforth to occupy so much of his thoughts, and to the maintenance and propagation of which his talents and time were to be so signally and so successfully devoted. He shall speak for himself:

"Frequently I felt to yield myself to God, and pray for the grace of entire sanctification; but then this experience would lift itself in my view as a mountain of glory, and I would say it is not for me, I could not possibly scale that shining summit; and if I could, my besetments and trials are such I could not successfully maintain so lofty a position. While thus exercised in mind Bishop Hamline, accompanied by his devoted wife, came to New Town, one of the principal appointments on the circuit, that he might dedicate a church which we had been erecting for the worship of God. Remaining about a week, he not only preached again and again, and always with the unction of the Holy One, but took occasion to converse with me pointedly respecting my religious experience. His gentle and yet dignified bearing, devotional spirit, beautiful Christian example, unctuous manner, divinely illuminated face, apostolic labor and fatherly counsels, made the profoundest impression on my mind and heart. I heard him as one sent from God, and certainly he was; his influence, so hallowed and blessed, has not only remained with me ever since, but even seems to increase as I pass along in my sublunary pilgrimage. Oh, how I bless and

praise God for the life and labors of the beloved Bishop Hamline!

"One week-day afternoon, after a most delightful discourse, he urged us to seize the opportunity, and *do* what we had often desired and resolved and promised to do, viz., 'as believers yield ourselves to God as those who were alive from the dead, and from that hour trust in Jesus as our Saviour from all sin.' Kneeling by myself, I brought an entire consecration to the altar. But some one will say, 'Had you not done that at the time of your conversion?' I answer, Yes! but with this difference — then I brought powers dead in trespasses and sin, now I would consecrate powers permeated with the new life of regeneration, I would offer myself a living sacrifice; then I gave myself away, but now, with the increased illumination of the Spirit, I felt that my surrender was more intelligent and specific and careful—it was my hands, my feet, my senses, my attributes of mind and heart, my hours, my energies, my reputation, my worldly substance, my every thing, without reservation or limitation. Then I was anxious for pardon, but now my desire and faith compassed something more—I wanted the conscious presence of the Sanctifier in my heart. Carefully consecrating every thing, I covenanted with my own heart and with my heavenly Father that this entire but unworthy offering should remain upon the altar, and henceforth I will please God by believing that the altar (Spirit) sanctifieth the gift. Do you ask what was the immediate effect? I answer peace—a broad, deep, full, satisfying, and sacred peace. This proceeded not only from the testimony of a good conscience before God, but likewise from the presence and operation of the Spirit in my heart. Still I could not say that I was entirely sanctified, except as I had sanctified myself to God.

"The following day, finding Bishop and Mrs. Hamline, I ventured to tell them of my consecration and faith in Jesus, and in the confession realized increasing light and strength. A little

while after it was proposed by Mrs. Hamline that we spend a season in prayer. Prostrated before God, one and another prayed; and while thus engaged, God for Christ's sake gave me the Spirit as I had never received it before, so that I was constrained to conclude and confess 'that the great work of heart-purity that I have so often prayed and hoped for is wrought in me—even in me. Wonderful! God does sanctify my soul. I can not doubt it—oh no!

"'Thou dost this moment save,
With full salvation bless;
Redemption through Thy blood I have,
And spotless love and peace.'

"The evidence in my case was as direct and indubitable as the witness of sonship vouchsafed at the time of my adoption into the family of heaven. Need I say that the experience of sanctification inaugurated a new epoch in my religious life? Some of the characteristics of this higher life were blessed rest in Jesus, a clearer and more abiding experience of purity through the blood of the Lamb. What a conscious union and constant communion with God! What increased power to do and to suffer the will of my Father, a steadier growth in grace, what delight in the Master's service, what fear to grieve the infinitely Holy Spirit, what love for and desire to be with those who love holiness, what access and confidence in prayer, what interest and comfort in religious conversation, what illumination and joy in the perusal of the blessed Word, what increased unction and power in the pulpit."

Such is the account of his entire sanctification by the Holy Spirit, given by this servant of Christ after more than a dozen years had elapsed; and when, if sober reflection could have corrected the errors of youth, it might be supposed it would have done so. Who can read a statement so simple and straightforward, so evidently faithful to the exercises of the soul, and so entirely consistent with the statements of conver-

sion and restoration he had previously made with so much candor and explicitness, and for a moment question the fact of the remarkable change which he here records? Shall we receive the testimony to the change which occurred when "all alone with Jesus" in the church at Carlisle; shall we accept the testimony to his ecstatic joy when, with a renewed sense of pardon, he leaped into his father's arms at the camp-meeting near Washington, and reject or doubt this testimony to the experience of "heart purity," the evidence of which he affirms was as direct and indubitable as the witness of sonship at the time of his adoption? Certainly he was as capable of understanding the correctness of the workings of his self-consciousness in the one case as in the other, and also of interpreting these workings in the light of Holy Scripture. Here we see the same definiteness as there; now, as then, he seeks for a distinct blessing, which he thinks is comprehended in the provisions and promises of the Gospel, and in answer to his faith it is given, accompanied with its appropriate evidence.

This blessing, the witness to which was immediate and direct, did not pass away in a moment; it did not subside with the occasion, as any casual emotion might do, but was abiding, and constituted an "epoch" in his experience, attended with characteristics which he had time to mark and prove. While I freely allow that the consciousness of the believer can not be an original source of doctrine, yet I must admit that when a doctrine is taught by fair inference in the Word of God, whether by command or by promise, or as matter of history, the testimony of consciousness in the living believer is authoritative, and must be accepted in the case of that particular believer, and as an index to all who claim a similar experience.

Mr. Wesley's attention to this great subject was first arrested, when he was forty-one years of age, by the profession of those who affirmed that they had experienced "salvation from all sin." He examined them carefully, and, though he was slow to

credit their testimony at first, he was finally constrained to accept it. Speaking of one such, he said, "If he can solemnly and deliberately answer in the affirmative" (certain test-questions which he had asked), "why do I not rejoice and praise God on his behalf? Perhaps because I have an exceeding complex notion of sanctification or a sanctified man. And so, for fear he should not have attained all I include in that idea, I can not rejoice in what he has attained."* In reviewing the same subject near the close of his life, Mr. Wesley wrote:

"In the years 1759 to 1762 their numbers" (those who professed deliverance from sin) "multiplied exceedingly, not only in London and Bristol, but in various parts of Ireland as well as England. Not trusting to the testimony of others, I carefully examined most of these myself, and in London alone I found 652 members of our Society who were exceeding clear in their experience, and of whose testimony I could see no reason to doubt. I believe no year has passed since that time, wherein God has not wrought the same work in many others, and every one of them (without a single exception) has declared that his deliverance from sin was *instantaneous;* that the change was wrought in a moment. Had half of these, or one third, or one in twenty, declared it was *gradually* wrought in *them*, I should have believed this, with regard to *them*, and thought that *some* were gradually sanctified and some instantaneously. But as I have not found in so long a space of time a single person speaking thus, I can not but believe that sanctification is commonly, if not always, an *instantaneous* work."†

Thus while Mr. Wesley believed and preached Christian perfection as a doctrine of the Bible and a duty of believers, he was incredulous as to its actual attainment in any particular instance until fully satisfied by the testimony of those whom he

* Tyerman's Life and Times of Wesley, vol. i., p. 462. Harper & Brothers, New York.

† Wesley's Works, vol. vi., p. 464.

had every reason to credit. Such was the common-sense way in which he dealt with all questions. To the long line of those who in the history of Methodism have lived as witnesses to this blessed experience, now was added a young herald of the Cross, who was destined, by his clear and forcible teachings, and by the eminent sanctity of his character, to do as much for its illustration, revival, and spread in this land as any other man of the last twenty-five years. It is not surprising that he should have ever after cherished the highest respect and the warmest affection for Bishop and Mrs. Hamline. As expressive of this feeling, and as bearing upon this period of his life, I anticipate, by an extract, a letter written to Mrs. Hamline a little more than a year before his death.

To Mrs. Bishop Hamline, of Evanston, Illinois:

"DESPLAINES, ILLINOIS, August 19, 1870.

"I am greatly disappointed in my failure to see you during this visit to the Northwest. Indeed, one of my cherished hopes in coming to this region was an interview with yourself. Your influence in the past links itself with my spiritual rest and Christian usefulness now, and will be an occasion of praise forever and ever. The name of Hamline, next to the name of Cookman, is the choicest jewel in the casket of my affectionate remembrance. Yourself and your dear husband were the instruments under God of leading me out into the clear light of full salvation. How I delight and dwell in my musings upon the memory of the beloved Bishop Hamline—his angelic face—his apostolic bearing—his unctuous words. It was after a sermon that fell from his precious lips, preached in an afternoon, that I carefully and intelligently consecrated all I had and hoped for to God. The entire consecration with faith in Jesus brought peace—deep, full, sacred, blessed peace; but it was not until the following day, when you and I were praying together (most probably you forget it), that the witness came clearly, strongly, and satisfactorily that I was wholly sanctified through the power of the Holy Ghost. With me now as at that epochal time in my history, my heart turns toward you *with an unutterable interest and love*. May our kind Heavenly Father bless you with abounding consolations. You must soon realize the joy of reunion with the glorified, and, more than this, the beatific vision of Jesus. Oh may I not hope to be associated with you and dear Bishop Hamline in the many mansioned home?"

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM COUNTRY TO CITY.—TRIP TO ENGLAND.

THE annual session of the Philadelphia Conference was held in the spring of 1847, at Wilmington, Delaware. Bishop Hamline presided. Alfred Cookman, having finished up his work, repaired to the seat of the Conference. He was an applicant for admission into the Conference, in company with a large number of young men, most of whom were his personal friends. The Conference was very full, it being found difficult to station all the preachers, and so, at the advice of the presiding bishop, it was voted to receive none "on trial." This was a sore disappointment to our young friend, as it was to others applying. He had preached at least a half-year under the presiding elder, and now to be obliged to do so an additional year was somewhat grievous. The policy of such a procedure on the part of a Conference is always of doubtful expediency, and sometimes may be very unjust and injurious to the parties and to the work. The young minister, however, had consecrated himself to the Master's cause, according to the order of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Church of his father; and so, bowing gracefully to the decision of the Conference, he accepted again a position under the presiding elder, and entered cheerfully upon it. He was appointed by the Rev. Daniel Lambdin to the Delaware City Circuit, in the State of Delaware, with the Rev. Robert McNarmee for his preacher in charge.

Before I follow him to his new circuit, an important fact in his inward life must be stated. It will be remembered that his early religious experience received a check upon the occasion of his removal from Carlisle to Washington. His later expe-

rience received a similar but a more prolonged check during this session of the Conference. The explanation is best given in his own words. They are a continuation of the published narrative before quoted from: "Oh that I could conclude just here these allusions to personal experience with the simple addition that my life to the present has answered to the description of endless progress regulated by endless peace! Fidelity to truth, however, with a solicitude that others may profit by my errors, constrains me to add another paragraph of my personal testimony. Have you ever known a sky full of sunshine—the power of a beautiful day subsequently obscured by lowering clouds? Have you ever known a jewel of incalculable value to its owner lost through culpable carelessness? Alas! that so bright a morning in my spiritual history should not have shone more and more unto the perfect day; that I should, under any circumstances, have carelessly parted with this pearl of personal experience. Eight weeks transpired—weeks of light, strength, love, and blessing; Conference came on; I found myself in the midst of beloved brethren; forgetting how easily the infinitely Holy Spirit might be grieved, I allowed myself to drift into the spirit of the hour; and, after an indulgence in foolish joking and story-telling, realized that I had suffered serious loss. To my next field of labor I proceeded with consciously diminished spiritual power."

His mind went under a cloud; not only did he lose the evidence of perfect love, but there followed its loss serious questionings as to the possibility of the experience which he had professed. There is always a tendency to depress the standard of Truth to the personal experience. It is not surprising, therefore, to find him using the following language: "Perhaps, to satisfy my conscience, I began to favor the argument of those who insisted that sanctification, as a work of the Holy Spirit, could not involve an experience distinct from regeneration." Such was the candor and caution with which he referred

to a subject which was ever to him cause of sincere regret. The heart so imperceptibly colors the opinions of every man that it is exceedingly difficult to have views which are wholly freed from its influence. It is well-nigh impossible to look at Truth with clear discrimination independently of its effects upon the affections. Hence the Bible makes the inward experience the interpreter of its meaning: "Whoso is born of God hath the witness in himself." There may be a dogmatic acceptance of the doctrine of regeneration, but there can be no adequate conviction of its reality until the soul by the change wrought in it receives the attest of its truth. Talk as we may of the objective truth of God's Word contained in the Holy Scriptures, that objective truth needs the accompanying witness of a believing, living self-consciousness, as contained in the Church, the Body of Christ, in order that it may be understood and felt as the power of the Holy Ghost unto salvation. The key which unlocks the secret wards of its spiritual treasury is the experience of the child of God. When the experience of the Church is high, the meaning put upon Christian doctrine is positive; when the experience is low, the meaning is correspondingly vague; the decay of inward life is marked by a decay of orthodoxy, and its rise by a return to evangelical faith. Yet I can not but admire the conscientious qualifying "*perhaps*" with which our friend states his impression of the probable bias which the lapse in his spiritual life may have imparted to his judgment.

This revelation is the more painful, in that the session of Conference, which should have been the means of establishing him in the "faith," became the means of unsettling him. He does not blame his brethren for it—only he allowed himself to be betrayed into undue levity. Methodist preachers, when they come together at the Conference after a year's separation, feel the buoyancy of spirit which instinctively arises from a sudden respite from pastoral cares; the gratification which is in-

spired by the greeting of old friends. Their system of itinerancy, according to which no man has any particular Church, and in the changes of which they regard themselves as candidates for each other's fields of labor, binds them into a closer unity of fellowship, and "a fellow-feeling makes them wondrous kind;" and so at their great festival they very naturally unbend in each other's company. Their observation is over a broad territory, they have mingled freely with all classes of people, their wits have been sharpened by contact with the shrewdest of mankind; and, with an infinite fund of anecdote, it is not surprising that their conversation should be flavored with incidents both grave and gay.

It may be one of the provisions of divine benevolence that the minds who see most clearly and feel most deeply the sins and misfortunes of the race do also see and feel most keenly their oddities; so that nothing is more common than for the sense of humor to be closely allied with the sense of devotion, and thus the gravity which would be so weighty as to overwhelm is lightened by an elastic gayety. That this gift may be abused is unquestionable; and that Methodist ministers, like other good people in an unwary hour, under the sway of exuberant enjoyment, may forget themselves, is possible. Beyond doubt there is too much trifling conversation at such times among them; and yet much depends upon the man himself, and upon the schooling of his conscience. Whatever effect the conversations of these "beloved brethren" had upon themselves, upon Alfred it was deleterious. His delicate conscience, all the more susceptible because of his recent higher experience, and for want of free intercourse with his brethren since he received it, was wounded, his religious life in his own estimation was harmed, and sank to a lower plane, on which it continued through some years afterward.

The new circuit was found to be very congenial. From a lady who knew him well, and between whom and himself there

was a pleasant friendship, Mrs. L. A. Battershall, of New York, I have received the following reference to his character and work at this time:

"Numbered with the most pleasant memories of the by-gone are my recollections of the Rev. Alfred Cookman. After his appointment to Delaware City Circuit, he was a frequent guest at the hospitable home of a relative, whom I was then visiting. Domiciled beneath the same roof, ample opportunity was thus afforded me of observing his habitual deportment in the daily amenities of life. He was richly endowed by nature with a genial spirit, and an ease and grace of manner which eminently fitted him to shine as the centre of the social circle, and yet I never knew him betrayed into a levity unbecoming a minister of the Gospel of Christ.

"Delaware City Circuit at that time embraced quite a portion of the wealthy agricultural district of New Castle County, Delaware, and was populated by a people of more than ordinary intelligence. To all classes of this population young Cookman came as the messenger of life. His young heart burned with love for souls. He went from his closet to the pulpit, and, thus panoplied with power, it is no marvel that the multitudes which from Sabbath to Sabbath hung upon the earnest pleadings of his eloquent lips for their salvation, regarded him as a royal ambassador from the Court of the Most High."

The year, according to this testimony, passed profitably and pleasantly, as he glided about from village to village and home to home among a devout and hospitable people. In those days it was not customary for the young preacher to have any fixed boarding-place on the circuit. No appropriation was made to pay his board, but he was expected to "stay around" among the families, remaining longest where it was most congenial, or where, from the means and kindness of the families, he could be rendered most comfortable, and found the greatest facilities for reading and study. Sometimes the young preacher would

be so fortunate as to have one or more such homes at each of the churches. Occasionally he could arrange to spend most of his time at one central home, where his books and wardrobe —if he were rich beyond the contents of his saddle-bags—could remain, and where he was always made heartily welcome. Nothing could exceed the cordiality with which the families at these homes greeted and entertained their young minister. The best room was at his disposal, the richest products of farm and garden, the choicest poultry from the swarming broods, were put before him. His appearance on horseback or in sulky at the road-gate was the signal for a prompt and general raid on the barn-yard. Lucky was the chicken which could discern the enemy from afar, and, timely warned, could make tracks for some hiding-place before the fury of urchin or dog fell upon its hapless head. At the protracted and quarterly meetings these homes became the gathering-points of the ministers and official members of the circuit, occasions of happy reunions, and of deep spiritual as well as social enjoyment.

At the session of the Conference in the spring of 1848, Alfred Cookman was again an applicant for admission, and was received in company with William H. Brisbane, Charles J. Thompson, Jacob Dickerson, George Maddux, Adam Wallace, William Walton, William Major, John Hough, Curtis F. Turner, Samuel R. Gillingham, Jeremiah Pastorfield, David Price, and William B. Mezick. His first appointment in the minutes occurs this year, to Germantown Circuit, which included Germantown and Chestnut Hill. The Rev. James A. Massey was his presiding elder. The circuit comprised a very beautiful suburban region of Philadelphia. Germantown and Chestnut Hill have grown into important stations. His labors were marked by fidelity to duty, and all his exercises were indications of the future successes which were destined to crown his ministry.

Large cities have a wondrous attractive power for all the forces which can augment their greatness. It is not surprising

to find Philadelphia Methodism speedily demanding Alfred Cookman for its service. In the spring of 1849 he was appointed as junior preacher, under the Rev. David Dailey, to Kensington and Port Richmond, with the Rev. John P. Durbin, D.D., as the presiding elder. He was now following closely in the footsteps of his father—this having been the first appointment of that godly man—and the brick church of Kensington, that was so often vocal to the eloquence of the father in his youth, was again vocal with the fervent and persuasive tones of the son. The veneration of the young minister for his father was an absorbing passion, consequently there could be no motive, next to his reverence for the divine Master and the sense of responsibility to Him, so powerful as the consideration that he was standing directly where his father had stood, and was ministering to the very people who had listened to his burning and instructive words. But little record remains to us of the exercises of his mind or of the character and effect of his preaching.

One of the best proofs of his success is that he was returned a second year to the same station, with the privilege of supplying his work for a part of the year and making a visit to Europe. It was about this time that I first saw Alfred Cookman. Although he and I had lived as boys in Baltimore through some of the same years, yet he was so far my senior, and the charges to which we severally belonged were so wide apart, that it happened we had never met. I had heard so much of him that when I learned he was to preach at the Charles Street Church, I hastened thither, and found myself a curious hearer amid the crowd which thronged the building. Many of those present had been his father's friends, they had known him from boyhood, they comprised very many of the most highly cultured Methodists of the city, all facts not a little adapted to embarrass the young preacher. His theme was the "Resurrection of Christ." His action is distinctly before me now, as he described Peter and John in their eager race to

reach the tomb of Jesus after they had heard the announcement of Mary that "He had risen from the dead." The preacher was then just past twenty-two years, of very handsome, pleasing personal appearance—slight, erect, with a most engaging countenance, rendered doubly attractive by the massy black hair which fell upon his neck and shoulders.

A letter to his grandfather Cookman immediately preceding the Conference of 1850 gives some insight to his feelings. It breathes the tenderest pathos, and shows how well prepared he was already to fill the highly important office of comforter to the afflicted:

"PHILADELPHIA, March 16, 1850.

"I find by a reference to the newspaper that a steamer will leave New York for Liverpool next Wednesday, and although the near approach of Conference gives me an abundance to do, yet I have managed to economize an hour, which I most joyfully devote to the delightful exercise of English correspondence. Though old ocean's waters serve to separate us, yet frequently thought and affection, hand in hand, defying space and distance, wing their way to your sea-girt isle, and by the eye of fancy I can see you moving from place to place or attending to your daily duties. How much I wish at such times that flesh and blood could travel with the rapidity of thought. Often would you find me lingering near, eager to pay you those attentions which not only old age but your recent heavy afflictions so imperatively require. Believe me, dear grandfather, when I assure you that I think of and deeply sympathize with you, and when I kneel down before Him who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, I endeavor as best I can to bear you up upon the wings of faith and prayer. The trials which in the mysterious providence of an all-wise God have come upon you are indeed distressing—aye, almost overwhelming. To bid farewell to those as dear to you as life itself, to gaze upon their countenances for the last time, not knowing that you will ever again meet with them in the flesh, to be left alone with no relative to offer his tender sympathies or kind attentions—all this certainly must have been agonizing in the extreme. At such a period, when the vanity of every thing sublunary must be seen and felt, how comforting and encouraging to remember that in the blessed Saviour we have 'a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother;' One that will never leave nor forsake us, who will stand by us in six trials, and not forsake us in the seventh. I have no doubt but that you have personally experienced the preciousness of

these scriptural assurances. Under the shadow of His wing you have found a covert from the stormy blast, and not only so, but perhaps with holy triumph are able to affirm that 'tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost given unto me.' These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are intended to work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I would gladly, if possible, pour the balm of Christian consolation into your bruised and bleeding heart. But I rejoice to remember that there is One who regards you with more than a mother's love; who behind a frowning providence is hiding a smiling face; who encouragingly whispers all things shall work together for good to those who put their trust in God. May his richest blessing rest abundantly upon you, and although you are descending the hill of life, yet with the everlasting arms beneath and around you, may you realize that your path shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

"In a little more than a week the Philadelphia Conference will assemble in our city. If all should be well, I expect during the session to be admitted to the order of deacon in the Methodist Episcopal Church. I have been endeavoring to preach Christ and Him crucified for upward of three years, and realize an increasing love for my work. Now that I am to be received into full connection, I would dedicate myself more unreservedly to God, and in the strength of grace resolve to spend and be spent more fully in the service of my Heavenly Master. Oh! that with the laying on of hands there may be a special anointing of the Holy Spirit, that I may indeed become a flaming herald of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

"My studies occupy much of my time and attention. Watson's Institutes (with which you are quite familiar) is perhaps the most difficult work we have to digest preparatory to examination. There is such a number of points and multiplicity of theories to treasure up that I find it requires a little extra attention. As a production I regard it as a masterpiece, an enduring monument to the cherished memory of its distinguished author. Our examiners have, by the direction of the bishops, put into our hands a volume entitled the Principles of Morality, by Jonathan Dymond, who, if I mistake not, is an English Quaker. The work, though embodying some excellent truths, contains much that is unquestionably heterodox. The author argues strongly in advocacy of the doctrines peculiar to the Society of Friends, such as quiet worship, absence of all excitement, unpaid ministry, etc., etc. I acknowledge that I have been considerably astonished during its perusal that it should have received the sanction of our Episcopacy, and can only account for it on the ground of inadvertence. I had intended to

give you some account in this letter of the slavery excitement, which has been shaking the temple of our liberties to its very foundations, but will be obliged, from the want of time and space, to defer it until a more convenient season. After the adjournment of Conference I shall be more disengaged, and will embrace an early opportunity to pen with more care another, and, I trust, more interesting letter than this. Mother, brother, and little sister were all well when I saw them a day or two since, and join me, I am sure, in the tenderest love to yourself and all other English friends."

Fortunately the student of Watson's Institutes in this instance had had a training at school which qualified him to grapple with its "number of points and multiplicity of theories." The examinations of the second year all satisfactorily passed, the probationer was admitted to the Conference and elected to deacon's orders. Together with all the members of his class (except one, whose place was supplied by the addition of Henry Hurn), he was ordained deacon by Bishop Waugh. There subsisted between Alfred Cookman and the members of his class a close and loving devotion through his whole career.

To young Methodist ministers the companionship of the four years' course in the Conference has much the same influence on after-life as that of the college or theological seminary has upon those who are students in such institutions. This "course," with its associations and its drill, however imperfect, is a feature of Methodism not understood by many who have wondered at the slowness of the Methodists to adopt theological schools, and their readiness to admit to the pastorate young men of comparatively little learning. Young preachers can be continued indefinitely on trial, till voted to deacon's orders, or they can be discontinued before this, if in the judgment of the Conference they do not give proofs of original capacity and of proficiency in study. So that it is a fair inference that by the time a licentiate is voted to orders he has become a well-informed minister.

As I have already intimated, Mr. Cookman was returned this year to Kensington and Port Richmond. There awaited him

now one of the most delightful episodes of his life. It was determined that he should visit his aged grandfather in England. The veteran himself strongly urged the visit, and it was thought the visit would be not only a gratification to him in his advanced years, but also that at this period of the young minister's life it would be of incalculable advantage to his future career. There is an education, a breadth and definiteness of view, a knowledge of the world, which can be obtained in travel which is possible in no other way. The preparations for the voyage were rapidly hurried forward, and in the month of July Mr. Cookman sailed in the steamer *Europa* from New York for Liverpool. It was with no little trepidation that the good mother risked her dearest treasure once more on the uncertain deep, and that the son launched upon the waste of waters which had engulfed his beloved father; but it was deemed the order of God, and so both took courage, as only thus a filial duty could be discharged. It was hard to leave friends behind, but grandfather, the best friend next to mother since the father's loss, and old England, the "sea-girt isle," were beyond.

To his mother, Mrs. Mary Cookman:

"STEAMER EUROPA, Friday morn, July 19, 1850.

"Thinking that you will feel interested in hearing of my progress, I avail myself of the present opportunity to pen a few lines, expecting to mail my letter this afternoon in Halifax. Concerning my movements up to twelve o'clock on Wednesday, George can give you all possible information. At that hour I bade him farewell, and with my fellow-passengers started on my voyage across the blue Atlantic. As we passed down New York Bay, I was much interested in viewing different objects upon the shore. Here was a magnificent edifice, with its solid and majestic columns, its symmetrical and beautiful proportions; there an angry-looking fort, with its gaping iron mouths, ready to roar at the presumptuous invader of the land of the free and the home of the brave. As we passed Sandy Hook, we parted with our pilot (the last link that seemed to bind us to the shore), and put out fairly to sea. By this time I had formed an acquaintance with one or two of the passengers, and had already enjoyed much pleasant conversation. The wind being pretty fresh, occasioned some roughness of the water, and

this, together with the combined influence of our sails and engine, caused the boat to roll considerably.

"Now, then, for the tug of war. As the ship would rise, I would not suffer the least inconvenience, but when, immediately after, she would make a lurch, there seemed to be a strange nervousness of feeling in the region of digestion. After a while a disagreeable dimness began to steal over my vision. I fought like a lion. At four o'clock the dinner-bell rang, and thinking that perhaps a little food would serve as a barricade on the field of battle, behind which I might ensconce myself from the attack of the foe, I ventured to eat a little. A very few mouthfuls served to suffice, for, finding myself driven from my position, I resolved on retreat. Down I went to my state-room, the enemy following me. First he got me on my back, then he seemed to turn every thing round within me, then he commanded me to restore what I had so insultingly swallowed at dinner-time, and, will you believe me, I felt obliged to yield. Up it came, with a good deal more, and I left the *treasure* at his feet. After so fierce a contest and so signal a defeat, I thought I might lie down. As seven o'clock (supper-time), however, rolled round, I inscribed on my banner, 'Often beaten, but still unconquered,' and staggered up again to the charge. A little toast and tea was all I ventured to take, and yet the enemy, as if maddened by my obstinate resistance, laid upon me a heavier hand than ever, and down I went a second time. What a trouncing I got! I gave him back all—aye, more than all. I shed tears, I groaned, I rolled, and at last, with some difficulty, got to bed—not to sleep, however. During the night, with the motion of the boat, I pitched from side to side, and as morning dawned rose and went forth to walk the deck. During yesterday, although feeling somewhat squeamish, I concluded myself decidedly better, and ventured to partake very moderately of food. Last night I slept gloriously, and this morning began to feel like myself again. I can now just perceive the aforementioned foe in the distance, almost out of sight, but now and then turning round to know whether it would not be well to return. From suffering experience, I think I know something respecting sea-sickness, and feel it in my heart to say that hereafter I will cheerfully relinquish my share to any other for a very trifling consideration.

"Our boat is a splendid one. Her officers are gentlemanly and skillful, her crew is orderly and obedient, the servants are attentive and obliging, and our accommodations are all that could be desired. At half-past eight we breakfast, at half-past twelve enjoy lunch, at four sit down to dinner, and at seven drink our tea. The dinner service is certainly splendid, and the food unexceptionable. We have every variety and any quantity. My state-

room is not quite as far forward as I should like, and yet its situation back is not without advantage, since there is an absence from noise and a retirement which is very desirable and delightful on shipboard; besides, I have it all to myself, and you know from experience that this is a desideratum. Our passengers, though mostly foreigners, are very kind and gentlemanly. Perhaps there is a little too much liquor drank, and last night I observed some card-playing. With two or three I have formed rather an intimate acquaintance, and find them to be gentlemanly, communicative, and affectionate.

"Our noble steamer has been urging on her course steadily since our departure from New York. Yesterday, notwithstanding rather unfavorable weather, she accomplished about two hundred and fifty miles. After we leave Halifax, and become a little lighter by the consumption of coal, I apprehend her speed will be very considerably increased. Though sailing on the vast ocean, with naught but sky above and sea around, I rejoice to say I realize the presence of my Heavenly Father. Indeed, I think I feel, as I never felt before, my dependence upon Him for life and every thing else. I desire to remain momentarily beneath the shadow of His almighty wing, for there I am sure nothing wrong can befall me. Thus far I have accomplished but little in the way of reading and writing; indeed, my sea-sickness would not allow of it. I hope, at least, to keep up a short diary, or, as the sailors say, *log*. The weather in this latitude is foggy and cold. Last night I wrapped myself in a blanket, and during the day find my overcoat no encumbrance. I spend much of my time thinking of you; you are as dear to me as my own life. May God bless and mercifully preserve you all. Pray for me. My sheet is full, and I must close my letter, written with some difficulty, owing to the motion of the boat and the noise of the machinery. Give my best love to brothers, little sister, and all friends."

CHAPTER IX.

THE FOREIGN TOUR.—ENGLISH SCENERY AND FRIENDS.

On Sunday, July 29th, he arrived at Liverpool. His own descriptions are so full and vivid as to supersede any efforts of mine to describe the delight with which he set foot on English soil. He had been educated all his life to believe every thing was grand and beautiful in England, the home of his ancestors; he had been taught so to revere his kindred, had been told so many noble things of them, that it was natural he should expect much, and hence should be correspondingly gratified if his ardent expectations were more than fulfilled. Though accustomed to the thought of the genuine worth of his kindred at Hull, the social and material elegance in which they lived, yet reared, as he had been, in the modest surroundings of a Methodist preacher's son, he was hardly prepared for all the refinement which was to greet him. Nothing could be more pleasing than the letters so artlessly detailing his observations and impressions.

To the mother and family at home:

"Stepney Lodge, Hull, Yorkshire,
Monday evening, July 29, 1850.

"I am in a perfect ecstasy! my joy is unbounded and uncontrollable! my only fear is that I will wake up and find it all a dream. *I am in Hull;* nay, more, I am at my dear grandfather's residence. Would you believe it? I can scarce realize it myself. And now I shall endeavor to conquer emotion a little, and, as calmly as I can, go back and detail my progress since my departure from Halifax, for in that town I mailed a letter for you written upon the ocean after we left New York. I will not advert to the routine of our proceedings on shipboard; if you should feel interested in any thing of that nature, have recourse to my excellent friend and host, viz., Brother J. Baily,

and you can readily obtain the desired information in a letter which I shall mail in the same steamer which will convey this. Suffice it to say that, after a prosperous and most delightful voyage of not quite eleven days, no storm having occurred and the wind having continued favorable nearly all the way, we reached Liverpool on Sunday a little after two o'clock. I immediately proceeded to the *George Hotel*, a magnificent establishment; when, having adjusted matters a little, I sallied forth, sighing most for religious privileges, for Christian communion. As I passed up the street, I providentially met with a gentleman whom I took to be a Wesleyan from his plain and neat costume. Addressing him, I inquired if he could direct me in my search for a Wesleyan chapel? Immediately informing me that he was connected with that excellent body, he kindly proposed to conduct me to the place of my pursuit. Arm-in-arm we passed up the street, enjoying pleasant conversation, and came to Mount Pleasant Chapel, one of the oldest churches in Liverpool. The Sabbath-school was about to close, and, by request, I united with them in prayer, and felt, indeed, access to our Father through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"Yielding to a most urgent and importunate invitation to accompany this brother home to tea, at six I went with him to Stanhope Chapel, when a brother Roebuck preached a most capital sermon. More of this anon. The service charmed me, but about this we will have one of our old-fashioned *tête-à-têtes* upon my return. After the benediction I went to Dr. Raffles's church, and after this to a Mr. Fallows's, a most evangelical and excellent member of the Establishment. Having accomplished as much and endured more than I anticipated in the way of church-going, I returned to my hotel, and about ten retired—not, however, to sleep. The circumstances of the evening as well as the prospects of the morrow drove slumber from my eyes. However, not to linger by the way, morning dawned, and an early hour found me at the custom-house, where the delay and tardiness of the government officers greatly provoked me. Stating my situation, and manifesting much anxiety, I secured my trunks, and drove with all possible speed for the railway-station, and got there just fourteen minutes past nine o'clock, one minute too soon for the Hull train. Off we flew at the rate of thirty miles an hour, through first a manufacturing and afterward an agricultural district, through tunnels—one of them *four* miles long—under and over noble bridges, until at about three o'clock we entered the station-house at Hull.

"I ascertained by inquiry as well as by reference to the directory that Mr. Holmes's residence was quite near. Taking my carpet-bag in my hand, I went round and found a double mansion, elegantly furnished, with hand-

some park and garden, and immediately rung the bell. A servant appeared. I inquired for Mrs. Holmes, ascertained she was in, was asked for my name, I replied a 'stranger;' the maid disappearing, my *own aunt* made her appearance. I observed, 'An unexpected visit from a stranger; look at me, and tell me if you know me.' She looked, and immediately replied, 'Cookman!' I was then introduced into the drawing-room, and cousin after cousin came in—among the rest two of aunt Smith's daughters: all fine, noble-looking girls. Shall I say I spent a pleasant hour with them? It was more, infinitely more; no adjective is strong enough to express the joy I realized. We sat around the tea-table, and conversed about the past and the present, and oh, it was glorious! There are many little facts and circumstances I could detail, but I must forbear. After an early tea I ordered a cab, and, after kissing one of my fair cousins who leaves in the morning for boarding-school in London, I proceeded to Stepney Lodge, where dear grandfather, I am most happy to say, still resides.

"As I approached the mansion my feelings were indescribable—a thousand reminiscences rushed irresistibly upon my mind and heart. I rung the bell, and immediately the housekeeper made her appearance, and told me that grandfather had gone to town to meet the property committee. I then resolved I would fill up the interim with the scrawl which I very much fear you will be unable to read. I am now waiting for him. Stepney Lodge is a lovely spot; I glance out of the window and there is a small park, bounded by a beautiful hedge; to the left is an artificial pond, surrounded on my right by a series of walks through noble trees and luxuriant shrubbery; and behind, a garden abounding with all kinds of fruit. I went out a little while ago and *tasted* gooseberries the size of a walnut, ripe raspberries, the largest strawberries I ever saw without exception, red and black currants, and saw pears, apples, and any quantity of ripe grapes in his summer-house. It is a paradise, glorious, enchanting. The house is old-fashioned and exceedingly comfortable, containing every thing that heart could wish. Over the mantel-piece of the room in which I am writing hangs a likeness of dear father—excellent, decidedly the best I have seen. Before me is the portrait of uncle Alfred, from which the picture we have is taken. * * *

"The Conference commences on Wednesday in *London*. Just think of it; how fortunate! Thus I can attend its sessions, and at the same time visit the lions of this world-renowned city. Thus far Providence has smiled upon me, and every thing has turned out just as my wishes would dictate. Shall I be ungrateful? Rather let me, by a renewal of my spiritual covenant, prove that I am not insensible to the thousand blessings which my Heavenly Father so indulgently lavishes upon unworthy me. Oh, I feel I can not be

thankful enough! My cup runneth over with mingled happiness and gratitude. John Holmes, the oldest son, is a fine fellow—tall, with rather an intelligent face, and certainly very affectionate; but, indeed, I can not talk about my cousins now; my feelings will not permit.

"Grandfather has not yet arrived. After an interview with him I will close this sheet and immediately mail it for Liverpool, in order that it may be in time for the *Pacific's* mail, which steamer sails on Wednesday. Let me just now say I am *delighted* with England. My expectations were exalted, and they certainly have been more than realized. Grandfather is coming; I see his tall, erect, and commanding figure. He has an umbrella under his arm, and walks both firmly and fast. He enters, but does not know me. Gradually I reveal the fact that his grandson stands before him. He manifests the greatest delight. During the evening, until about half-past ten, we sat together conversing about persons and things; when, taking my candle in my hand, I retired to my room, and received from him a most affectionate good-night. He still dresses in the old English costume—short clothes, white cravat—and is altogether the finest-looking old gentleman that I have seen in England, or that I have ever met with. He is splendid; oh, how happy I am in his society! This morning he goes to perform his duties upon the bench. He has a charming residence. * * * I have entered into particulars, because I know that they will interest you. Much more I have to say, but I must close. I have seen Mr. Henwood, a noble old gentleman, so kind and affectionate. He sends his affectionate regards, as do all the others."

The following letter from a niece of Mrs. Cookman will be read with interest:

"HULL, August 2, 1850.

"Your son tells me that you are expecting a letter by the mail which leaves this afternoon, and will be very much disappointed if you do not hear from or of him, so he has deputed me to be his secretary. I wish his choice had fallen on a more able person, for I am not much accustomed to or fond of letter-writing; but I doubt not any news of your son will be to you most acceptable, so I will do my best to tell you his present whereabouts and future course. He and my uncle Holmes went this morning to Sheffield, where they will spend a few hours, thence going to Doncaster, will stay all night there. Poor mamma will, I know, be very much dissatisfied that *only one* night is allotted to her, but my cousin has promised to preach in Thornton Street Chapel twice next Sunday, so he is obliged to return to Hull on Saturday afternoon; he leaves here again on Tuesday for London, visiting

Birmingham, Bristol, and Oxford on his way. He will, of course, stay a night in Bristol to see my aunt Hannah and her family. From London he is going to Paris, Brussels, and Antwerp, returning about next Saturday fortnight to Hull, where he will preach on the following day in Waltham Street and George Street Chapels. I do not think he has yet made up his mind whether or not to visit Scotland. I wish you could see our family party gathered around the table, endeavoring to fix his tour, with maps and railway guides before us; you would be quite amused to hear first one proposing one plan, then a second another; one says he ought to see this town; another, that is the best route; while my cousin Alfred sits quietly looking on, and listens to all in turn.

"Now I have told you what I know about my cousin's proceedings, I must tell you how delighted we all are to have him among us; our only regret is that our eyes behold *one* and not *all* our cousins, with their dear mother, but we are at present satisfied with what we have, and hope at a future day to see some, if not all, of your family in England. As we can not know them personally, we have endeavored to do so by report. Alfred yesterday morning brought their portraits from Mr. Cookman's, so we all tried to judge their characters by their faces, and made Alfred tell us their several characteristics, till I could almost fancy I know my hitherto stranger cousins. As for John Holmes, he has taken such a fancy to little Mary, that he proposes sending me his own sister Annie and exchanging me for his cousin; but that I suppose you will hardly agree to. I asked Alfred yesterday if he had any message to send to you, and his answer was, 'Tell my mother that my cup of happiness is overflowing;' indeed, he receives so many attentions, and is so much thought of by his father's friends, that it will be a wonder if he is not quite spoiled before he returns to Philadelphia. Mr. Cookman and he dined with us last Wednesday; the old gentleman seems quite pleased with and proud of his grandson. He went with us in the evening to hear him preach in Thornton Street Chapel, and appeared quite delighted with his sermon. And now, my dear aunt, I must draw my letter to a close; in order to make it *valuable*, my aunt has half promised to cross it, so on her return from the town, if she has time before the post leaves, I shall request her to do so.

"My aunt Holmes has just come in from the town, but says it is impossible for her to find time to write even a few lines this afternoon, but I am to tell you that she is quite charmed with her nephew."

It seems, then, that grandfather, aunts, and cousins were all "charmed" with the American cousin. Such a picture of him

and his surroundings from the pen of a maiden cousin must have been very grateful to the mother's feelings. His visit was not only busy with sight-seeing and social joys, but also with engagements to preach. In the very chapels where his father, when but a year or two older than he, first thrilled the hearts of his neighbors, the son now preached to the delight of grandfather and all. To the noble parent it must have been as though his own son were alive from the dead.

To his mother:

"STEPNEY LODGE, HULL, August 5, 1850.

"I should have written to you the latter part of last week but for the multiplicity and urgency of my engagements. The Hull people have made quite a lion of me, and hence I am expected to exhibit myself on all convenient occasions, and occasionally interest them by my American roaring. My cousin Ella Smith, however, very kindly consented to do what only the circumstances of the case prevented me from doing, and that was to transmit a letter by last Saturday's steamer. I have now seen pretty much all my relatives in this part of England, and I speak sincerely when I say that they not only answer but far exceed my most sanguine expectations. On Friday last I visited Doncaster, my mother's native town, taking Sheffield on my route. Arriving at the station, I found aunt Smith, uncle John, and his lady, in waiting for me. After a most cordial greeting we proceeded to Arthur Smith's, at Sunny Bar, where I partook of some refreshments, and then sallied forth with uncle John to see the place. We visited the old church where you worshiped in childhood, saw the house in which you were born, the residence of grandma from which you went when you were married, aunt Elenor's former home, called upon her brother, Dr. Murray, and had some conversation with him, continued our walk as far as the celebrated Doncaster race-course, looked at the deaf and dumb institution in the immediate vicinity, and about six o'clock returned to Sunny Bar. Forgetting the copse of trees, or rather the name of the place which aunt mentioned, I plucked a few sprigs of grass from a plot in front of the old home, and also secured a few leaves from some shrubbery immediately before the house in which you were living at the time of your marriage.

"In the evening we had a family party at aunt Smith's. All the sons except Theophilus were present, and until two o'clock the following morning we remained together enjoying familiar conversation. They are a noble set, treated me like a prince, and would only part with me on Saturday morn-

ing with the promise that I would endeavor to visit them again. I was particularly pleased with uncle John: he is affable, gentlemanly, very intelligent, consistently pious, and exceedingly affectionate. * * * I shall have much to tell you about Doncaster upon my return, a town I have been better pleased with than any I have seen in England yet; indeed, the road in the direction of the race-course, with its noble trees and splendid residences, is almost unsurpassed by any thing I have ever seen.

"On Saturday I returned to Hull, and yesterday preached in Great Thornton Street to overflowing houses. In the evening I think there were at least 3000 people in the chapel, and multitudes went away who could not even obtain a foothold. They had me the day before placarded upon the public corners and in the shop-windows, 'Rev. Alfred Cookman, of Philadelphia, Sir,' etc., will preach at such a time. * * * In the morning they wept all over the house. Some shouted. I was blessed, and indeed we had a gracious waiting together. I am sure I never preached better than at night; much feeling was evinced, and I trust that the great day will reveal the result of my yesterday's labors. As I pass through the streets, they point at me and say, 'There he goes; that is Mr. Cookman's American grandson.' Aunt Holmes, who you know is exceedingly prudent, said to me that I ought to come to England, for at the present juncture they needed some like me. You can have no idea of the respect which is paid and the affection which is manifested toward me. Grandfather heard me twice yesterday, and appeared highly delighted. The old gentleman is in good spirits. His friends think that my visit at this time is a Godsend, for it has had a most reviving influence upon him, who previously seemed quite depressed. He is a noble man. Every hour serves to increase my love and respect. This morning I visited the tomb of my grandma Cookman and uncle Alfred, under the Waltham Street Chapel. By-the-way, they (the authorities) wish me to re-open the chapel for them next Sabbath week. Do not know but I shall comply."

He was next to enjoy what, to every Anglo-American and to every American Methodist, is one of the richest treats which can possibly be afforded—the sight of London, and the sight of the British Wesleyan Conference. To a young man whose reading has been chiefly in the English classics, in the history and poetry of Britain, until the names of her authors and of the places of their resort, have become household words, it is a source of inexpressible pleasure to look upon their very haunts—the

streets where they walked, the inns they frequented, the favorite nooks where they loved to linger. And to one imbued with the spirit and traditions of John Wesley, nothing could be more inspiring than to touch the institutions, to see and hear the men to whom he had transmitted his wisdom and power. All this was the more enjoyable to Alfred Cookman because the teachings of his father and the presence of his father's friends imparted a realness to every thing about him. These conditions, added to his own enthusiastic nature, transferred him into the very heart of all he saw and heard.

To his mother:

"LONDON, August 16, 1850.

"I leave this populous city in a few minutes for Hull, and yet I can not consent to quit its precincts without penning you a short note, especially as this will be the last opportunity of writing by to-morrow's steamer. I have now been spending one entire week in London, the heart of the world. I have seen and heard much which it will be vain for me to attempt to detail at this time and under present circumstances. Grandfather met me here last Monday evening, and we have been spending our time together very pleasantly. I have been honored with a seat on the platform of the British Conference, have been treated with the utmost respect and affection by the different preachers, have heard many of them in debate, and last Sabbath enjoyed the gratification of listening to Dr. Bunting in the morning and Dr. Dixon in the evening. Yesterday I saw the royal procession for the purpose of proroguing Parliament—Her Majesty Queen Victoria, His Highness Prince Albert, dukes, duchesses, etc., etc. All the public institutions, such as the British Museum, Bank of England, Tower of London, etc., I have visited. Oh, it will take me a week to tell you about my sojourn in this city of cities! On my way here I spent about a day and a half with aunt Townsend in Bristol. * * * She studied my happiness, and did all in her power to render my visit pleasant.

"Next Sabbath I preach at Kingston Chapel, Hull, in the morning, address the Sabbath-school in the afternoon, and preach for grandfather at his church, viz., the Tabernacle, in the evening. You will say, 'Too bad—too bad! gone for rest, and yet performing usual labor.' Well, I will be careful, and spare myself as much as possible. You have no idea what a sensation I have produced in my father's native town.

"I shall not get to France. Grandfather seems anxious that I should be with him, and, as I have only a short time longer in England, I suppose I must forego the trip and gratify him. Perhaps at some future day I shall enjoy the opportunity. I should like to write more, but have not the time. We must now start for the cars. God bless you. I think of you all, morning, noon, and night. Oh, how much I have to tell you all! If you were with me, my pleasure would be complete."

To his mother:

"STEPNEY LODGE, August 19, 1850.

* * * "On Friday morning last, in company with my grandfather, I left great London, and set out for Hull. Early in the evening we reached our place of destination, and as we passed through the streets found that handbills had been printed and posted up, announcing that I would preach on the Sabbath. This is something so new to me, so different from our plan across the water, that I acknowledge it does not strike me favorably. At Stepney we found Cartwright, the housekeeper, quite well, and all things pretty much the same as when we left. On Saturday I of course began to think about my Sabbath duties and exercises. After determining on my subjects, I went down to uncle Holmes's, and spent an hour or two most delightfully with John, Annie, and aunt Smith, who is keeping house for them during the absence of her sister. I took with me your very beautiful and affectionate letter, and ventured to read the greater part of it to them, as I did also to grandfather. The reference to little John's success was most touching, and served to draw tears from many eyes. Let me most sincerely congratulate him on his triumphant admission into the high-school, and at the same time express the hope that his future course will be marked by as much devotion to study, as much honorable and rapid advancement, as has his past career in connection with Zane Street. The allusion in your letter was the more interesting from the fact that we sometimes tease Annie Holmes about John Emory. She is a pretty, amiable, affectionate girl of thirteen, quite large for her age, and I am sure that a sight of her would be attended with danger to any of my susceptible brothers. From the daguerreotype she seems to have taken quite a fancy to John; hence the tormenting she suffers.

"Well, to continue my narrative, Saturday passed away, Sunday came. Arm-in-arm my grandfather and I proceeded to Kingston Chapel, a most commodious, elegant, and comfortable place, capable of accommodating between three and four thousand people. We found it crowded, and I proceeded in my old style (for any other suits me as well as Saul's armor did David) to represent the Christian warrior, his enemies, duties, and triumphs. God

owned and blessed the word, and notes of joy were heard in our camp. In the afternoon I addressed the Sabbath-school in the same church, and certainly I witnessed one of the most beautiful and gratifying spectacles that I could possibly have looked upon. The immense gallery, fifteen or sixteen pews deep, was filled all around with well-behaved children; the lower floor was crowded even in the aisles with their parents, as well as the friends of the institution. Oh, it was a glorious, a memorable occasion! I did myself full justice, and the people seemed more than gratified. In the evening I preached in the Tabernacle. * * * I have in my short life seen dense crowds, but I am sure that I never saw any thing to equal the congregation last night. It was one unwieldy mass of human beings, almost piled one on top of another, and hundreds, I am told, went away who could not obtain even a foothold.

"I chose as my subject the Great Supper, and preached, I hope, in demonstration of the spirit and with power. I felt that my arm was strong, and that by the help of God a blow must be struck. At the close of the service a number came forward to the altar as penitents, and I left with the soldiers of Christ in possession of the field. Will you believe me if I tell you that I could scarce walk home. I had let out every link of my chain, and I had hardly strength left to stand. However, here I am this morning, a little mondayish, it is true, but by nightfall I expect to be as bright and vigorous as ever. Grandfather seems quite delighted with my efforts, but tells me I will kill myself, and that I must not be so lavish of my strength and voice.

"As I intimated in my letter written in London, I fear I will not get to Paris this time. Grandfather seems anxious to have me with him during the remainder of my stay in England, and I suppose that, in view of his advanced age, he must be gratified in this. Perhaps in a very few years another opportunity will offer, and then I can travel somewhat upon the Continent. I have been making some inquiries about the Southampton steamers, and I think that there is no one to start about the time I want to go home. I have seen England, talked with my grandfather and other relatives, and now I begin to feel as if it were my duty to get back to my field of labor again. I know exactly how they are situated, and am sure that the interests of both appointments would be subserved by my return. Early in September, then, I expect to turn my face homeward. So look out for me about the 20th or 25th. At every step in Hull I meet with the former friends and acquaintances of my beloved parents. Some of them weep when they see me, others manifest great pleasure, and refer with enthusiasm to their former acquaintance with my father and mother. One

attended the same school with them, another went a-fishing, and a third was a bosom friend. Dr. McClintock and myself stayed at the same place in London, went to see the lions together, and enjoyed much pleasant intercourse.

"I preach to-night (Tuesday) at Kingston; next Sabbath at Waltham and Thornton Streets."

To his mother:

"STEPNEY LODGE, HULL, August 23, 1850.

"Thus far, I believe, every steamer which has left England for America since my arrival here has borne a letter to those at home. To-morrow is the regular day for the departure of one of the Cunard line, and although I have written once this week, yet I can not consent to let this opportunity pass without dispatching you at least a few lines. My health since I have been in England has continued quite good, and my enjoyment has exceeded my most sanguine expectations. The comforts by which I have been surrounded, the exceedingly affectionate attentions of different friends, as well as the continual feast of vision with which I have been providentially favored, all have conspired to render the last six weeks the happiest period of my life. The country presents the appearance of an extensive garden, separated for convenience sake into small fields by beautiful green hedges. Indeed, I know of no feature in the natural scenery of England which will sooner strike the traveler's eye than the neat and well-trimmed hedges which are every where to be seen. The foliage of the trees, too, as well as the verdure of the fields, is much richer and more elegant than any thing we see in America. This is owing to the humidity of the atmosphere, as well as to the absence of that intense heat which so often with us exerts a blighting influence on all natural objects. Some of the landscapes here are surpassingly beautiful; perhaps there is not that wildness in the scenery that we have with us, but there is a cultivation and variety, together with a picturesque appearance and classic interest, which never fails to please the eye and captivate the heart.

"In the distance, for instance, upon the summit of a noble hill, you discover, surrounded by towering trees, some old castle which has stood for centuries, and which, crumbling under the influence of time, occupied only by the owl and the bat, remains as a monument of former times. Not far off you perceive a comfortable-looking farm-house; a noble lawn in front, and a highly cultivated garden in the rear. Around you see the different fields. In one, perhaps, the cattle are quietly grazing; in another laborers are diligently engaged in securing the golden harvest; while in a

third the little lambs skip in every direction, as if almost intoxicated with joy. Away in the horizon is a flourishing town (England abounds in towns), which always has its church built in the Gothic style, and whose glittering spire, like a golden finger, points toward heaven, as if it would direct the minds of the people thitherward. While gazing upon the scene, diversified with fields and forests, noblemen's mansions and laborers' cottages, gray and gloomy castles, as well as chaste and cheerful village churches, you are suddenly startled by the whiz of a locomotive, which, with its train, like a rushing comet, in the twinkling of an eye disappears in a damp and gloomy tunnel; then emerging passes over the massy stone bridge of a quiet stream, and, after darting about among the hills for a moment, is lost to view. I did not know when I attempted this description that I should have covered so large a portion of my sheet, and yet I am sure that, if I had done the picture justice, it would require more space and time than I at the present could conveniently or possibly employ. Any thing further of the same nature I will have to postpone until my return to your delightful society.

"On Tuesday evening, according to appointment, I preached in Kingston Chapel to at least three thousand people. God was pleased to own and bless His Word, delivered in an humble dependence upon the energizing influences of the Holy Spirit, for at the close of the services, during a prayer-meeting which was held, about forty individuals presented themselves at the altar, desiring an interest in the prayers of God's people. Wednesday night I blew my trumpet in old George Yard, where Wesley, Benson, and my beloved father have been heard, with pleasure and profit. Again our altar was more than crowded with those inquiring their way to Zion. Last night I preached in the Tabernacle to a congregation literally wedged together. The crowd I think was even greater than on last Sunday evening. I never saw a more attentive, solemn, and feeling auditory. We had seekers all around our altar as well as in the vestry. Not unto me, O Lord, but unto Thy name be all the glory. Who knows but that a kind Providence, who thus far has most delightfully opened my way before me, has determined to honor my visit by giving me souls for my hire and seals to my ministry. If there should be only one who, in the great day of final retribution, shall ascribe to my instrumentality his or her salvation, I shall be more than compensated for the time spent or the money expended in my visit to the United Kingdom.

"On Sabbath I am to be at Waltham Street in the morning, and at Thornton Street at night. Oh that the God of my father would be present to wound and to heal! I fear I shall not see aunt Holmes before my return. She continues at Swanage, and uncle doubts whether they will get

back before my departure. I have had many very, very pleasant interviews with aunt Smith. Yesterday she took me to see Mr. and Mrs. Morley, who now reside in Hull. They referred to you in the most affectionate manner."

From Mrs. Smith, of Hull, to Mrs. Mary Cookman:

"HULL, August 28, 1850.

"MY DEAREST MARY,—Many of my correspondents complain, and not without just cause, that I have degenerated in regular correspondence. * * * And now, my beloved Mary, I congratulate you on being blessed with such a son. If he is a specimen of the other members of your family, those relatives who live to welcome them as they may come to visit England have a rich treat in store. I say I expected to see a nice, intelligent young man, but I had not raised my expectations to the reality. Not one of your family rejoices more that he has come over than myself. I have such a delightful picture in my mind of the union betwixt the families on this side and beyond the Atlantic as I can not describe; there was a break in the chain, but now we seem firmly linked together. I feel we are all one, and bound together by indissoluble ties. Oh! we are sorry to let him leave us, and we are not alone. How many in Hull will have to praise God for his visit! They have said, 'Can't you use influence for him to remain in Hull another month?' with much more. I could only silence them by assuring them it was impossible; we had received that morning a schedule of his berth, which was taken in the steamer *Asia*. He leaves behind him a name, but, what is of far more worth, many, many seals to his ministry. Any one but himself would be in danger from popularity; when any thing is said in his praise to his grandfather, he replies, 'Oh, he owes much to his mother; I always had a very high opinion of her judgment, attention, and piety.' It gladdens my heart to hear him.

"I walked with Alfred one morning to introduce him to old Mr. Morley, who desired he would pray with him ere he left the manse. I stayed a little time after his departure to his grandfather. Mr. Morley was obliged to leave the room, and go into another to give vent to a flood of tears ere he could converse with me, and on his return every other subject was banished except you and yours, and the pleasure he had in your society when he lived in Fishergate. My dear sister Holmes mourns her absence from home at this time. I reap the benefit, for I might have been in another part of the country in ignorance of my loss. I do, indeed, praise God for my present privileges; and I feel no doubt but that Mrs. H. is in her providential path, for, to use her own words, 'However dear Alfred is, Thomas is dearer, and has the first claim on my consideration.'

"As I have sat under Alfred's ministry, I have recalled the instrument in God's hand of leading me to Himself, and then was filled with praise that an insignificant being like myself should be the first link in the glorious chain; and when I saw the altar rails crowded with penitents, my heart leaped with joy, my heart burned within me, and I thought what glorious results might arise from one of the least being savingly converted to God."

This letter very appropriately closes the correspondence touching the visit to England. His letters, written with so much frankness, the outpourings of a faithful son's heart to his devoted mother, give ample incidental proof of the wide-spread, popular, and useful influence of his pulpit exercises. The testimonies of his cousin and aunt abundantly confirm this incidental revelation. The aunt acknowledges any one but himself would have been in danger from such popularity. Such unbounded enthusiasm over so young a man was well calculated to turn his head; but it does not seem to have affected him beyond exciting a devout recognition of God's goodness, and pleasure at the gratification he thought it would afford his loving mother. Then as always there was, to all appearances at least, a sweet absence of egotism, a simple unconsciousness of the incense of praise which was ever rising in his presence. His absorbing purpose was to win souls to Christ. For his success in "slaying sinners," in receiving the gratitude and applause of the people, he ascribed all the glory to God.

Three features crop out in these letters. The character of his preaching, already substantially formed, and which he calls "his own"—pictorial or dramatic representation—is seen in the account of some of his sermons; the tireless zeal for work, unable to rest without work, and uniting with his recreations ceaseless preaching; and also we hear of him for the first time before an audience of children, a direction in his ministry in which he was afterward to acquire such remarkable facility and success.

CHAPTER X.

HOME AGAIN.—MARRIAGE.—MINISTRY AT WEST CHESTER AND HARRISBURG, PA.

THE early autumn found him at his post in Kensington, preaching to large congregations, and attending to all pastoral work with fresh delight and diligence. Of course the little family group on Race Street was frequently visited. He had come back filled with beautiful thoughts and recollections, which it was his joy to communicate to those who were as dear to him as his own life. Much, however, as he enjoyed the pastimes of home, he did not neglect the duties of his charge —his hours were full of useful occupation. Thus busily employed, the autumn and winter glided away, and the session of the Conference approached.

A few extracts from his correspondence while stationed at Kensington are sufficient to show the zealous spirit with which he was animated:

"*January 14, 1850.*

"On Sabbath I preached both morning and evening to excellent congregations. God was eminently with me on both occasions. At night I was uncommonly assisted: an unusual seriousness pervaded the assembly, some came forward to the altar, and I trust that eternity will alone reveal the extensive good done. Last evening I preached with much liberty; more knelt at our altar than on the previous night, numbers in the congregation wept freely, and we are encouraged to look for better times. I do most earnestly desire to be a successful minister of the New Testament. While I experience an unceasing love for my honorable and responsible work, at the same time I would perceive a corresponding influence attending my labors. Oh, that God would constitute me a chosen instrument of good to those among whom I may toil from time to time!"

"January 6, 1851.

"Last Sabbath, the first Sunday of the new year, I preached in Kensington morning and evening on the subject of the Judgment. I have rarely addressed more attentive and solemn congregations. God was eminently with me on both occasions. At the conclusion of the evening service we entered heartily into a prayer-meeting. In exhortation I felt as if I was only the speaking-trumpet of Jehovah. Almost immediately twelve approached our altar, all very interesting cases; a number professed to experience peace, and before ten P. M. we had the shout of the King in our camp. To God be all the glory."

"February, 1851.

"In Philadelphia a good feeling seems to prevail at almost every appointment. Trinity, the church where our family worship, has been catching some of the descending drops. Little sister professes to have experienced peace, and has joined the Church; she seems to be as firm as an ocean rock. There are only two now of our family who remain without the pale of the Church, viz., George and Will, and we are praying and confidently hoping that very soon they will become the subjects of saving grace. On Sunday I preached three times, twice to immense congregations in Kensington, and in the afternoon at Fifth Street to a very full house. This evening we renew the battle, and expect that our efforts will be more signally blessed in the salvation of priceless souls. My heart is in the work. I glory in being permitted to head the sacramental host in the assaults upon the strongholds of the wicked one."

"February, 1851.

"Certainly there is no enjoyment at all comparable with that experienced by those who possess a divine testimony that they have been introduced into the family of Heaven, and as the object of their Father's approbation and love. Oh! let us be ambitious to possess all the mind which was in Christ Jesus our Lord, for every day only serves more to satisfy me that decided and devout spirituality and supreme religious enjoyment are twin sisters. God has joined them together, and it is impossible for man to tear them asunder."

On the 6th of March, 1851, Mr. Cookman was united in marriage to Miss Annie E., daughter of Mr. Abraham Bruner, of Columbia, Pa., by the Rev. William Urie, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Previously to the marriage he wrote to Miss Bruner:

"From the commencement of my religious course I have felt anxious to commit my all into God's gracious care and keeping, that I might be guided and cared for by His infinite wisdom. In the matter of marriage, above all others, I have been desirous that He should rule and overrule; indeed, I have incorporated this in all my private addresses to a Throne of Grace. In looking back upon the past I think I am prepared to say, 'He hath done all things well,' and in all my associations with you can most distinctly perceive the hand of an overruling Providence. I desire to be unfeignedly grateful to my Heavenly Father for this and any other manifestation of His tender care and watchful love, and in the strength of grace would solemnly promise Him to be more devoted to His glorious cause in all future time."

As evidence of the happiness which crowned this union, and also of the pleasant and delicate way in which he ever manifested his affection for his wife, I anticipate by some years the following effusion, written at the close of his pastoral term at Union Church, Philadelphia, 1861:

"This day completes the first decade of my married life. On the 6th of March, 1851, I linked my fortunes with those of my dearly beloved wife, and now on the tenth anniversary of our *blessed union* I would record my gratitude to Almighty God, whose kind providence gave and hath preserved to me one so well deserving the name of 'help-meet.'

"Our life, made up of fidelity and love, has been like a deepening and widening stream, upon which we have floated together in delightful harmony. Our home, with its five little buds of beauty and promise, has been an *Eden spot*, where our Infinite Father, who dwelt with the first pair in Paradise, has vouchsafed us His constant presence. Oh, how much of pure love and true joy have been compressed within these ten years—the happiest ten years of my life! Accept, my precious Annie, this humble but sincere testimony to your thoughtful care, constant kindness, unsullied goodness, untiring fidelity, and uninterrupted, aye, increasing devotion.

"We have lived and loved together thus long—and now on this anniversary day let us, in token of our gratitude to God and our affection for one another, build a pillar of witness. It shall be composed of these ten stones, one for each year of our married life: LOVE—TRUTH—PURITY—KINDNESS—FIDELITY—SINCERITY—CONSTANCY—THANKFULNESS—HOLINESS—CHRIST THE FOUNDATION STONE.

"This is the altar upon which we will renew our vows 'to love, comfort, honor, and keep one another so long as we both shall live.'"

Within a few weeks after the marriage Mr. Cookman was appointed to the charge of West Chester station. West Chester is the county town of Chester County, about thirty miles from Philadelphia, and beautifully situated in a rich farming district, which was settled originally almost wholly by Quakers. The town has long been noted for the thrift, intelligence, and sobriety of its inhabitants. The Methodist Church there was not strong either in wealth or numbers, but the members, feeling themselves highly favored by Mr. Cookman's appointment, resolved to do the best they could to render him and his bride comfortable and happy. On the evening of their arrival they were welcomed to their new home—the house having been put in order, and tea being spread for their entertainment. The young minister and his youthful wife were at once put at their ease—a cozy, genial feeling suffused their hearts; they began the first evening to love their new people, and continued to love them to the end. A little kindness shown to a pastor upon his first appearance in a new charge goes far to render all the days spent in the charge pleasant and useful; while the neglect of it, though it may be from thoughtlessness, causes a chill which it takes many days of kindness to overcome.

Mr. Cookman, accustomed hitherto to look up to a head for direction and support, was now thrown wholly on his own resources. He knew where was the source of power — the Throne of Grace — and resorting to it, he obtained help of God. His preaching from the opening Sunday attracted general attention. His fame had preceded him, and very soon his church was crowded, not only by the Methodists and their immediate sympathizers, but also by the *élite* of the neighborhood. The "Friends" were charmed by the spirituality of his sermons and the godly simplicity of his manners. He became the central figure of the religious community, and all eyes and hearts were turned toward him; his influence grew day by day, and his ascendency over the minds of the people

became in a short time such as no other minister had attained in years.

With a laudable ambition for success, and an earnest zeal for the divine glory, he was a man full of work, spending the forenoons of the day in the study and the afternoons in pastoral visitation, and mingling socially with all classes of the people and with all denominations of Christians. The sociability and catholicity which so distinguished his father, and which subsequently became so pre-eminent in him, began already to be seen as traits of character. Effective and popular as he was in the pulpit, he did not depend wholly upon the efforts of the Sabbath to accomplish the work of God, but was incessant in his attentions to the members of the congregation in the private walks of life. There was no element of power which he did not seek thus early to subordinate to the efficiency of his ministry. But while absorbingly devoted to his own charge and to the work which lay directly before him, it was not possible for one of such gifts, whose family name was talismanic in all the churches, and whose personal reputation was already wide-spread, to escape constant appeals from far and near for special services in the way of sermons and addresses.

The following letters to his young friend, Andrew Longacre, give a faint idea of the intensity and extensiveness of his labors. As will be seen, his summer vacation in 1851 was spent in attendance upon various camp-meetings. He went rapidly from one to another of these gatherings, and preached to the delight and edification of the masses who frequented them. A strange way to take vacation! And yet the habit adopted thus early in his career continued uniformly through life; his month for relaxation, instead of being spent in the recreations of innocent pastimes or sports, in absolute desistance from his customary home work and excitements, was usually absorbed in the most active and taxing exercises. The change of scene, the bodily movement, the forming of new acquaintances, the free,

joyous mingling with his ministerial brethren, the ever-fresh inspirations which such associations evoked, but, above all, the opportunity of working for the Master on a wide-spread scale—these were considerations which controlled and sustained his choice.

To Mr. Andrew Longacre, of Philadelphia :

"WEST CHESTER, September 5, 1851.

* * * "Believe me that my silence has not been occasioned by any diminution of kindly or affectionate feeling, but purely by the force of circumstances. As you are aware, I have been away from my charge for the last few weeks, and during most of my absence have been so circumstanced as to render letter-writing a matter of absolute impossibility. In the providence of God, I have been permitted to return to my field of labor, and very gladly avail myself of a little leisure to communicate with one for whom I have long entertained the sincerest regard. Your prosperity has always greatly interested me. Believing that God had endued you with very considerable talent, satisfied that you possessed in no small degree the grace of the Holy Spirit, I thought that in a more public sphere you might better promote the glory of God and subserve the interests of His Church ; hence my strong desire and earnest entreaty that you should prayerfully consider the important work of the Christian ministry. The subsequent developments of divine Providence have, I think, most clearly proved that the impression which induced me to single you out for this sphere was directed from heaven. Perhaps you may be disposed to think that I am writing too plainly when I make allusion to your gifts and graces. Believe me, I am perfectly sincere, and express myself in this undisguised way from a firm conviction that many young men suffer more from depression than elation of spirits. From a fear of adding fuel to the flame of vanity, encouragement is often withheld, while the individual is writhing under the influence of despondency and despair. I believe in my soul this is wrong, and, as a general thing, I make it a rule to repeat to the person referred to any thing commendatory which I may have heard. This is a privilege which becomes a feast for my own soul, while at the same time it is intended to stimulate and encourage the one addressed.

"Most sincerely do I rejoice in your success, and as earnestly do I pray that God may bless you with that measure of health and strength which shall fully fit you for the earnest and successful prosecution of your ministerial labors. During the summer I attended five camp-meetings, preaching frequently and laboring arduously. I greatly regretted my inability to reach

Red Lion, which ground I have not visited for two years. My valise was packed and arrangements made to start, but at the last moment I concluded that I would yield to the solicitations of Peninsula friends, who positively insisted upon my tarrying longer in that region. God seemed to own and bless my feeble endeavors, so that I would fain believe my course was overruled for good. I trust that the meeting at Red Lion, like many which have preceded it in that forest, proved both pleasant and profitable. I enjoyed for a day or two its counterpart on the Shrewsbury Circuit, where there were upward of three hundred tents and any number of Baltimoreans. At present I am enjoying my happy and comfortable home—a very little paradise. When will you come and participate in its pleasures? I can promise you a cordial welcome and hospitable treatment. Next week I desire, if possible, to spend a day or two with mother, whom I have not seen for many weeks. Perhaps you may be in the city then, and I may enjoy a personal interview, which, after all, is infinitely preferable to pen-and-ink communication."

To the Rev. Andrew Longacre:

"WEST CHESTER, January 10, 1852.

* * * "On Thursday evening we crossed our own threshold and sat down again at home. Your letter was of course carefully read, and its urgent request duly considered. Will you believe me when I say that nothing at the present would afford me more pleasure than to spend a week with old and cherished friends on Chestnut Hill. Indeed, I would, if it were at all possible, strain a point and neglect something else that I might serve you. I appreciate your situation, and would feel it a privilege to go to your help, but I am under obligations to go to Wilmington next week, and as I have been absent from my people for some time, and expect to leave them again shortly, I fear that it will be out of my power to render you this desired service. Indeed, I have almost concluded to commence a series of meetings here about week after next, so that my way seems to be entirely blocked up.

"I would not have you think that I esteem Chestnut Hill so insignificant a spot as not to merit my notice or efforts, for I speak truthfully when I say that, as it towers above the neighboring hills, and indeed deserves the title 'Prince of Hills,' so among the many places I have been privileged to visit, I know of few, if any, which stand as high in my affections. May God signally own and bless your proposed effort, and grant that, in a moral as well as in a natural point of view, it may become one of the most desirable and delightful spots on God's great footstool. You have my sympathies, prayers, and should have my feeble efforts if I had not previously engaged to help Dr. Hodgson early in the new year."

It appears from this letter that his friend, to whom in the former letter he had written such encouraging words, had himself begun preaching, and was making his first efforts at circuit work. To the request for help, Mr. Cookman found it difficult to say no, and nothing but previous engagements prevented his yielding. The disposition to oblige every body, to answer to every call for assistance, was strong in his nature; and while it may have interrupted his habits of self-culture and systematic study, it yet extended his influence by constantly enlarging his acquaintance among the churches. Among the excursions from home was one on a literary errand—probably the first of its kind—to Dickinson Seminary, located at Williamsport, Pennsylvania. The following letter to his wife discloses a little of the anxiety of the young orator, but more of the joy of the young father:

"WILLIAMSPORT, Monday noon.

"I have a leisure moment which shall be devoted to a family correspondence. After bidding you farewell I returned to my lonely home, and proceeded to change and finish my address. This accomplished, I arranged my matters, and, joining Professor Wentworth, returned to the dépôt. We dined with your friend H——, and started about one o'clock. A long, tedious ride in the canal-boat brought us to Williamsport about half-past twelve on Saturday. General Packer met me at the boat, and is entertaining Brother Myers and myself most elegantly. Our home is the head-quarters in the town. Yesterday we had three services, Professor Wentworth preaching in the morning and your humble servant in the evening. All went off satisfactorily. The officers of the institution and the people of the town are more than kind, offering me every attention. I deliver my address this evening. Can not tell how it will take. The examinations are progressing, and will not be concluded before Wednesday. I find that I will not be able to get home before Friday. How is my precious Bruner? Dear little duck, I have him and his mother in my mind almost constantly. Kiss him over and over and over again for his absent papa."

With all these engagements, the duties of his pastorate were not neglected. The protracted meeting at which he hints was soon begun, and resulted in a general and thorough revival of religion, the fruits of which remain to this day.

At the ensuing session of the Conference—spring of 1852—he was elected to elders' orders and ordained by Bishop Janes, and re-appointed to West Chester. His work this year was but a continuation of that of the preceding. The revival did not spend itself, but progressed through all the months, marked more by the universal quickening and growth of believers than by the multiplication of converts. The probationers were instructed and thoroughly drilled in the methods of a godly life. And yet a large number of persons professed conversion during the last months of his ministry. In the families of Judges L—— and D——, and many others, he was eminently useful, and his name is revered as a household word. Miss Annie Lewis, afterward the wife of the Rev. Dr. Erastus Wentworth, whose beautiful life closed so early in China, was one of those whose character he greatly assisted to fashion. But I will allow the Rev. W. C. Best, of West Chester, to testify of the permanent good accomplished during these years:

"Mr. Cookman and his wife were received with open arms and warm hearts, for his reputation as a man of humble piety and a minister of uncommon ability had preceded him. He at once took a position in the community, and fully retained it until his removal, such as none of his predecessors had enjoyed. He found a church embarrassed with a debt of three thousand dollars of ten years' standing, very much in need of repairs, and with a small number of members, and they by no means wealthy. During his term of service he not only put the church in thorough repair, but paid off the entire debt. He found here but one hundred and fifty-two members. At the end of his first year he returned one hundred and seventy members, and seventy-five probationers. At the end of his second year he reported two hundred and twenty-five full members, and twenty-six probationers. The church was always full when Brother Cookman was to preach. He had larger regular congregations than any of our ministers have preached to here, either before

or since, with perhaps a single exception, and that was during the war.

"He was as popular in other churches as in his own. Everybody loved him, and spoke of him as the lovely, eloquent Cookman. His popularity in the town may be judged of from the number of marriages he was called upon to perform. Though the town was small, and the society weak, he married almost as many in the two years as were married in the past five years, though the town and society have largely increased in numbers. Of those converted under his ministry there was much of stable material. One minister (Rev. Thomas Poulson), two of the members of the present board of trustees, and several others of the present efficient workers in our Church, were part of the fruit of his labor. This fruit, remaining after the lapse of twenty years, certainly speaks favorably of the character of the revivals had under his ministry. It is but fair to state that Brother Cookman gave an impulse and position to Methodism in West Chester such as it never had, and we still enjoy the benefits thereof. Though twenty years have rolled away since he labored here, his name is still like 'precious ointment poured forth,' and his memory is deeply revered by all who knew him. He is still called the most popular preacher of any denomination that ever statedly ministered in West Chester. It is difficult to decide which was the stronger attraction for the people, his unassuming piety and sweet, loving spirit, or his thrilling eloquence that so enchained the multitudes."

The session of the Philadelphia Conference in 1853 was held at Harrisburg, the capital of the State of Pennsylvania. Mr. Cookman's term had expired at West Chester, and in the course of the administration he must be sent to a new charge. He was undoubtedly the most popular young minister in the Conference. Several prominent churches within his Conference, and some from beyond it, applied for his services; among them none pressed its claims with more persistence than the Locust

Street Church, Harrisburg, the seat of the Conference. The members of this charge were on the spot; they had generously opened their homes for the entertainment of the preachers. Their suit prevailed; and when the appointments were announced, and Alfred Cookman was read out for Locust Street, the crowded audience burst into a tumult of applause.

There could have been no situation better suited to promote Mr. Cookman's self-development and to extend his influence than this appointment. The borough of Harrisburg, containing about 8000 inhabitants, was beautifully located on the east side of the Susquehanna River, and, as the capital of the state, was a point where controlling business and political interests concentrated. In the winter time the Legislature drew together not only the members of the state government, but also leading men having ends to accomplish with the government. The Locust Street Church was conveniently located, and very soon his zeal and eloquence attracted general attention. He was elected chaplain of the House of Delegates, was selected to offer the prayer at the inauguration of Governor Bigler, and at this early age obtained relatively as great an ascendency over the prominent politicians and the community at Harrisburg as his father had previously done over all classes at Washington. The following notice of his preaching, from one of the Harrisburg papers, shows the estimate in which he was held:

"ELOQUENT SERMON.—Rev. Mr. Cookman preached another eloquent sermon on Sunday evening. * * * The whole discourse was replete with sublime thoughts and beautiful illustrations, and made a salutary and we trust a lasting impression upon the minds of the large and attentive auditory. One secret of Mr. Cookman's popularity and success as a preacher is that his sermons are *all* good, and that whatever emergency calls him forth, he has a peculiar faculty of happily adapting his discourse to the occasion. We have observed this in several instances, when Mr. Cookman has delivered impromptu addresses in response to unexpected calls made upon him. We like his sermons on account of their freshness and originality, and the thoroughness and earnestness

with which they are delivered. For a young man he is a speaker of superior ability. He has been thoroughly educated, and has all the finish which literary acquirements can bestow upon naturally fine powers of declamation. Mr. Cookman bids fair to win for himself a reputation for pulpit eloquence equal to that enjoyed by his eloquent and lamented father."

Toward the close of his first year Mr. Cookman was strongly urged to go to Pittsburgh to take charge of a new Church enterprise in that city, but a sense of duty to the charge he already occupied prevailed over the urgent invitation, and he remained and completed the full term of two years. His ministry was highly successful in adding members to the Church. The multitudes who frequented the sanctuary and listened to his beautiful imagery and forcible appeals, did not go away merely enchanted with the witchery of words and action; they remained to weep for their sins, and "to lay hold of the hope set before them in the Gospel." If the preacher culled flowers with which to please the fancy, he did not the less forge and hurl sharp arrows which pierced the consciences of his hearers. At the end of two years the Church had gained ninety members and seventy probationers, and increased equally in its financial and social standing.

Through these years the devoted pastor was also an active itinerant, going hither and thither throughout the state and in adjoining states, on all possible errands of evangelistic and literary labor. Traces of him appear among his Baltimore friends. It will be recollected that his father, in 1835, had written in a young lady's album. During a visit there, on the opposite page, he gave the subjoined exquisite expression of filial love:

"Nineteen years have elapsed since the hand of my beloved father pressed this leaf; and I can not express the gratification I feel in reading the beautiful incident which he here records, and in availing myself of the opportunity of penning upon the back of the same leaf a slight tribute to his cherished memory.

"Although a mere boy when he imprinted upon my cheek a burning kiss and whispered in my ear a last farewell, yet to-day I have his image dis-

tinctly daguerreotyped upon my spirit, while his virtues shall ever be treasured as the very *choicest jewels* in the casket of my remembrance.

"With a largely endowed intellect, he possessed a capacious heart, which was literally filled with a wealth of affection. His lively interest in, and his abiding love for the different members of his family, forms the sweetest reminiscence of my life. Nor was his love confined to these. Breathing an atmosphere of kindness, he drew around him a large circle of dear and devoted friends. * * *

"But alas! the withering thought, like a scorching sirocco, sweeps over the heart, that though he was, yet he is not. To use his own eloquent language, long ere this 'the sea-weed may have become his winding-sheet, and the coral rock his pillow;' but, if indeed the ocean is his magnificent mausoleum, the rolling, roaring surge his solemn requiem, and the floating iceberg his only tombstone, we encourage our hearts with the revelation that a day has been appointed when 'the sea shall give up its dead.' Then, *then* we shall meet him again, and be reunited in a world where 'love shall wreathe her chain around us forever.' Oh! let us emulate his excellent example, that in heaven we may renew and eternally perpetuate our affectionate intercourse, and blend our voices in the triumphant hallelujahs of the skies.

ALFRED COOKMAN.

"Harrisburg, March 7, 1854."

Mr. Cookman had entered the field as a lecturer, and, judging from the comments of the press, obtained no mean success.

"The first of a series of lectures in the Methodist Episcopal C[hurch], Fourth Street, of this city (Philadelphia), was delivered on Thursday evening of last week by the Rev. Mr. Cookman, of Harrisburg. The subject the Bible. He is a very eloquent man. He delivered it without 'notes,' and on this account it was very impressive. There was a peculiarity which we think worthy of remark, although it may have been noticed by many of the audience. It was this: he availed himself of 'apt alliteration's artful aid,' said that the Bible was the *basis*, the *bond*, the *bulwark*, and *mast* of free institutions. It was the basis, because we derive from the Bible the best principles of government, and that from it alone we learn the lesson of self-government. Other books take up the subject from the circumference, and proceed thence to the centre; this begins at the centre and works out to the circumference. In other words, those begin with *man* at large, and this with the individual. * * *

"He showed that the Bible was the bond of institutions, because it taught the universal brotherhood of Man—knew no North, no South, no

East, no West. He showed it to be the bulwark of our Republic by comparisons with other governments in other days, which have passed away, because they had not the principles of the Bible to protect them from vice and its destructive tendencies. And he concluded by showing that the Bible was the boast of our free institutions, because it was designed for universal acceptance, and was universally circulated among us by Protestant Christianity, and on this branch of his subject he was *very* eloquent. He compared the different denominations, when met together to promote the distribution of the Bible in our happy land, and from thence throughout the world, to a rainbow—all the colors in the bow being distinctly visible, and yet happily harmonizing in one beautiful whole! And then concluded by calling upon us as *American citizens* to protect the Bible as the sheet-anchor of our liberties, and to act out the pretty sentiment, 'We won't give up the Bible.'"

A year later he lectured again in Philadelphia, and received from another paper the following appreciative notice:

"On Monday evening we had the pleasure of hearing the fifth lecture of the course before the Young Men's Christian Association by the Rev. Alfred Cookman, of Pittsburgh. The Presbyterian Church, capacious as it is, was well filled with a cultivated and intelligent audience. The lecturer's theme was Concentrated Energy, and his remarks were mainly addressed to the young, urging upon them, in language at once argumentative, forcible and eloquent, the necessity of a fixed purpose, pursued with untiring effort, or, in a word, of *concentrated energy*, as a prerequisite to success and distinction in any pursuit, and in *all* the pursuits of life. Mr. Cookman's style is clear and perspicuous, while it is at the same time brilliant and ornate. His voice, which is perfectly under his control, is remarkably distinct, musical, and sonorous, and his manner of delivery is highly oratorical and effective. His lecture gave unbounded satisfaction, and placed him high in the opinion of our people as a finished scholar and a popular speaker. Mr. Cookman, although quite a young man, has already won for himself an enviable reputation, and, if his life and health are spared, he will undoubtedly before many years stand in the very front rank of the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

While stationed at Harrisburg, he was invited to deliver the annual sermon before "The Society of Evangelical Inquiry of Dickinson College." The sermon was well received, and established for its author a high reputation with the students. In the evening of the same day on which this sermon was deliver-

ed, he preached at the Methodist Church in the town. It was the first time he had been in the old church since he was a boy in his father's household. Vivid and tender were the memories which rushed upon his heart, and he could not do otherwise than refer to his father and the occasion of his own conversion. We are so fortunate as to have a description of the effects of his preaching from an eye-witness, the Rev. J. Duey Moore, of the Baltimore Conference, who was then a youth resident in Carlisle. Writing to the Rev. John E. Cookman, he says:

"I remember, when I was a boy, your brother was invited to preach in Carlisle. In the morning he preached in the College Chapel, and at night in the old church, Main Street, the same church which your father had the charge of in other days. His theme was 'the Vision of Dry Bones.' The church was crowded. In concluding his sermon, he referred to his sainted father in a most touching manner; the effect was beyond all human description. I remember hearing an old minister of our church who had sat under your father's ministry say, 'The form of George Cookman came before me while his son was preaching, to such an extent that I was carried back to the days when the crowds gathered to hear what I regarded the best pulpit orator I ever listened to.'

"After concluding his sermon, he gave an account of his conversion, which took place in that church when he was quite young. Speaking of it he said, 'Kneeling there (pointing to a bench at the right of the pulpit), a poor, distressed penitent, a brother in Christ, a member of the Presbyterian Church, by the name of Mr. Hamilton, came to me amid my sorrow, and, placing his hand upon my head, told me to "look fully to Christ, and He would save me;" and as I tried to do as he told me, the darkness gave way, and, kneeling there with this dear brother by the Cross, great light and peace rested upon me. I was forgiven.' As your brother had not heard from Mr. Hamilton* for

* Mr. Hamilton died in 1873, greatly honored and beloved by the people of Carlisle.

years, he thought he had passed to his reward; but he (Mr. Hamilton) was in the church, and just as soon as the congregation was dismissed he walked to the altar and introduced himself to your brother. I will never forget their meeting. As the people were retiring from their pews, their eyes caught the venerable form of Mr. James Hamilton advancing toward the pulpit, and, as all eyes followed him until he came before your brother, they waited to see the result. Oh, how the people did weep as they looked upon two who had not met since they met amid the light of the Cross—one as a penitent, then crying 'Save me!' the other saying, 'Christ can save!' As I write I think I can see myself as I was then, holding my dear sainted father's hand (he was an intimate friend of your father and brother), and, looking up into his face, saw the tears flowing down his cheeks while he looked upon this meeting."

These two letters to his wife give pleasant glimpses of domestic love and pastoral fidelity.

To his wife, Mrs. Annie E. Cookman:

"HARRISBURG, Tuesday morning, ——, 1853.

"I confidently expected to hear from you yesterday morning, and felt considerably disappointed when the postman reported No. 51 empty. The little missive arrived, however, last night, and was read over and over again. Your assurances of unwavering affection were very grateful to my feelings. In this world of insincere profession and mere external manifestation, it is delightful to know that there is one warm, true heart in which you may confidingly repose. The genuineness of your love I have never questioned for an instant; and, next to the Pearl of great price, prize it as the most precious of my heart's jewels. Be assured that it is not foolishly expended. I am glad that our dear boys continue so well. May God in His providence spare their health and lives many, many years. They are two beautiful, blessed children, for whom we ought to be profoundly thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. I am, of course, very anxious to have you at home again. All is desolation in your absence. Still, if you are realizing benefit in Columbia, I will not be so unwarrantably selfish as to urge your return. I can manage to exist, and will willingly live in hope a little longer if your welfare may be subserved. Make yourselves comfortable, get fat and

strong, and come home when you feel like it. Yesterday was another pretty full day. In the morning two funerals—a long walk in the hot sun and through the dust from the cemetery—in the afternoon running round, and at night a class to lead. I breakfasted at D.'s, dined at C.'s, and supped at Z.'s, with Miss Kate M—— and Mr. Alpheus W——, who returned together from P—— yesterday. This morning I breakfasted again at D.'s, shall dine at D.'s, and sup at C.'s. My neighbors and all my friends are very kind. Part of every afternoon I spend with poor J——, who seems perfectly resigned and composed in the prospect of death. Young McM.'s trial comes on next week. I suppose I shall hear from sister D—— (who has been out of town since last week) all the particulars respecting the contemplated camp-meeting. I believe I have given you all the news."

"HARRISBURG, Wednesday afternoon, 3 o'clock.

"I have just finished two letters, and before laying aside my pen will drop you a line. Here I am at my study-table again, attending to correspondence and other matters. Oh, that you were at my side! Oh, that I could look around and see the faces of my beautiful boys! After leaving you this morning I was hurried to Lancaster, where I spent my time very agreeably with Mr. E——, at Murray's book-store, and with Brother Bishop at his parsonage. Arrived at home in a snow-storm. Thought that perhaps you would accompany me. On my return found two letters, one from Heston, in Reading, the other from Janes, in Chambersburg; both asking me to come to their help. During my absence, Mrs. Wm. C—— sent a large market-basket full, piled up—about four pounds of almonds, four pounds of raisins, a peck of chestnuts and shell-barks, a large glass of calves'-foot jelly, a large fruit-cake, and a number of toys for the children." * * *

CHAPTER XI.

MINISTRY AT CHRIST CHURCH, PITTSBURGH, PA.—INCREASING FAME AND USEFULNESS.

THE Methodists of Pittsburgh having completed their new and beautiful Christ Church, renewed their invitation to Mr. Cookman to consent to be transferred to take the charge of it. Their solicitations were seconded by Bishop Simpson, then a resident of Pittsburgh. Notwithstanding Mr. Cookman's love for his Conference, in view of the advice of the bishops and the noble enterprise at Pittsburgh, he accepted the invitation, and was transferred by Bishop Morris in the spring of 1855. It was not without regret that the people of Harrisburg parted with him. As evidence of the universal respect and affection with which he was regarded, I quote from one of the newspapers of the day:

"FAREWELL SERMON.—Rev. Mr. Cookman preached his farewell sermon on Sabbath evening. So great was the anxiety to hear it that the church was crowded to its utmost capacity at an early hour, and a large number of persons were unable to obtain seats at all. Mr. Cookman preached a discourse eminently appropriate to the occasion, and was more than ordinarily eloquent and impressive. He spoke with much apparent sincerity and feeling, and a large portion of the congregation were affected to tears. Mr. Cookman has labored in this community for two years with great success, and was respected and beloved not only by his own congregation, but by the people of our town generally. He was popular with all classes and all denominations, and his departure is universally regretted. He left Harrisburg yesterday afternoon for Pittsburgh, the scene of his future ministerial labors, carrying with him the heart-warm blessings of hundreds of true friends. May the largest prosperity attend him."

How Mr. Cookman was impressed with Pittsburgh before his transfer.

To his wife:

"PITTSBURGH, Tuesday afternoon, June 14, 1854.

* * * "About three o'clock the train came thundering along. Finding seats we hurried off, and until day-dawn dozed away the tedious moments. Then the scenery, wild and majestic, opened upon us, which of course we enjoyed richly and to the end of our journey. Some of the views in crossing the mountain transcend any thing I have ever beheld. Without accident we reached Pittsburgh in good time, not near as much fatigued as I frequently am after riding to Philadelphia. You will feel anxious to know what I think of Pittsburgh. Well, I must say I rather like it. True, there is a good deal of smoke and the houses generally look cloudy, but it is not near as bad as I anticipated. The buildings are good, some of the residences quite elegant, and every thing seems to exhibit the spirit of energy and enterprise. The place strongly reminds me of many English cities which I have visited. It is not unlike New York, more like it certainly than Philadelphia. I fancy that like myself you would be agreeably disappointed in Pittsburgh. I have already traversed the city pretty thoroughly; among other places I have visited the new Christ M. E. Church, and do not think me enthusiastic or extravagant when I say that it is far, *far* ahead of any thing in the form of a Methodist Church I have ever seen. They are about finishing the basement, which is very handsomely frescoed and fitted up in elegant style. The audience-room will be most magnificent. I wandered through, as I desired, entirely *incognito*. If I can I will procure a lithographic representation of the edifice, that you may have some idea. Well, now, I hear you say, 'Just as I expected and prophesied. He had no business to go to Pittsburgh; a convert already.' No, dear, I would prefer to remain in the Philadelphia Conference than to assume the responsibility which would devolve upon the pastor of such a charge. Very much would be expected, and I do not want to be obliged to meet such expectations. Worse things, though, you may rest assured, might happen to us than being sent to Pittsburgh. So far as I am concerned, with my beloved Annie and charming boys, I could be perfectly happy in a cabin on the tallest peak of the Alleghanies. It is your presence and enthusiastic love which covers my path with sunshine and makes me a happy home any where. You need not fear, I think, a transfer to Pittsburgh. I am staying at the *City Hotel*, kept by Messrs. Glass & Chase, gentlemen who have treated me already with very marked attention and favor. I wonder how you all are this evening. I think of you almost constantly, and am the happiest when I can bask in the refreshing radiance of your sunny faces. Well, I believe I have written all that I have to communicate just now. It is, I fear, an illegible

scrawl, penned in the midst of noise and confusion. Puzzle it out, however, and when you have done kiss yourself over and over again for one who loves you better than all the world beside. Then take up Bruner, and give him a dozen for his papa; then *petty Kenney*, and let her have an equal number.

Mr. Cookman was twenty-seven years of age when appointed to Christ Church. The new edifice, of the Gothic order of architecture, situated on Penn Street, was then the costliest church building in American Methodism, and was about the first decided advance in the new movement in architectural beauty in Methodist houses of worship. The number of members that brought this laudable undertaking to completion was small. They were, however, men of means, courage, and prayer. They felt that the right man in the pulpit would secure success. No higher mark of confidence could have been placed on Mr. Cookman than that he should be selected for so important a position.

The sequel proved the wisdom of the choice. Under his control, the enterprise moved off prosperously from the beginning, and the most sanguine expectations of its originators were fulfilled. Though young in years, he was a man of experience; courageous, and at the same time cautious, he showed both the ardor which prepared him to enter fully into the advanced views of his official men, and also the judgment to direct their earnestness with the steadiness and tact which insured the best results. His power to attract the people by his preaching was to be tested as never before. Heretofore his churches had been "free," and this was "pewed;" but his ability was at once recognized, and his church was speedily filled. His faculty as an organizer was to be promptly and fully proved, and that, too, under circumstances peculiar and trying—but here, as in the pulpit, he showed himself eminently capable. It is doubtful if there be any surer test of the ability of a minister for administration as well as preaching and pastoral work than the successful guidance of a great and powerful Church, especially in

the forming periods of its existence. To balance all conflicting claims, to keep all the forces in accord, to incorporate new elements with the old without violence, to evoke and start enterprises into safe and effective channels, to impress all the workers and all the methods with a thoroughly spiritual stamp—all this requires talents of a high order, and talents well poised. The native sense and the admirable discernment of Mr. Cookman were never more displayed, before or since, than in the management of the affairs of Christ Church.

But while busy with his new charge in the first months of his pastorate, he does not forget the fond mother from whom he was so far separated. Could there be a more affectionate expression, alike creditable to him and to her, than this letter? I give it with its italicizing retained.

To his mother, Mrs. Mary Cookman :

"PITTSBURGH, May 25, 1855.

"Will's letter reached us this week, bringing the unwelcome intelligence that you have been seriously ill. At such a time we feel it to be a duty and a privilege to take up our pen and express our sympathy and undying love. Your children may sometimes exhibit a censurable carelessness and indifference, but believe me there underlies their conduct as *enthusiastic affection* for their *mother* as ever found a place in a human heart. The effect of your instructions, and the influence of your kind, gentle nature, have been to win every noble feeling of which they are capable, and if they were to-day severally interrogated who is the best and purest among human kind, they would unhesitatingly answer, '*Our mother!*' I have no greater happiness than to sit down and, in connection with the eventful past, dwell upon those *virtues* which you so beautifully developed in the midst of your family, and think of that ceaseless and *self-denying love* which always shed sunshine on our home. It was and is *a happy home!* the remembrance of which shall be dear to our hearts through the entire period of our earthly pilgrimage. *Thank you, dear mother, a thousand times over*, for your gushing sympathy, your faithful instructions, your consistent and beautiful example, your jealous care and unremitting efforts for the happiness and welfare of your children. You have been not only a good mother, but the *best of mothers.* Our appreciation of your character and services increases with our age; and when you are safely housed in glory, we will often come together and wonder that one

so pure and lovely was so long lent to us and the world. *My burning tears attest the sincerity* of the feelings I express—feelings which are largely shared by every member of your beloved family. Even Will, whom you occasionally deem a little headstrong and unmanageable, tells me in his *letter* that requirements which once seemed irksome to his independent nature are now regarded in an entirely different light. It is his *highest delight* to serve and gratify her whom he feels to be his *best and truest friend.* The loss of his mother, he states, would blot out every earthly joy, and make him almost wish for the oblivion of the death-slumber. Shall I ask you to excuse this spontaneous outburst of filial feeling? This, I am sure, will not be necessary, for while it has relieved my overflowing heart, it may, perhaps, kindle a pleasurable feeling in the bosom of one whom I *would be proud to make happy.* I hope by this time your sickness has been arrested, and you are able to attend to your domestic duties. When you feel that you can conveniently and comfortably take up your pen, we shall be most happy to receive one of your thrice-welcome letters. In the mean while charge one of the fraternity to act as your amanuensis, and let us at least know the state of your health and the course of domestic affairs. The children exhibit every day some new charm, some fresh attraction. Next week the Western Virginia Conference meets in Wheeling. If nothing should prevent, I think I will join a company of preachers and go down for a day or two. The Pittsburgh Conference meets in Johnstown on the 13th of June."

Mr. Cookman had been transferred, and had entered upon his work in advance of the session of the Pittsburgh Conference. The transfer to a new Conference involved a trial to him, as it would to any man of like refined nature, and it was with no little misgiving that he looked forward to the session. A transfer for the express purpose of being appointed to the grandest and wealthiest Church of the Conference, would be likely to render him an object of a somewhat careful and cool attention. His fame had preceded him—would he measure up to it? His praise was in all the churches—was he proud and reserved? These and such questions would occur to brethren and to him. Methodist preachers are but men, and, like other men, they do not relish being dispossessed by strangers of the fields which their own hard toil has made to bud and bloom.

But it was impossible for a body of good men to have hard

feelings toward Alfred Cookman. He had only to show himself among his brethren, and all prejudice was disarmed. From youth there was that in him which transfused the hearts of all with love and confidence. The Pittsburgh preachers were won by his first looks and words. He impressed them as a true Methodist preacher, with a single aim, with all the instincts and habits of his brethren, and that he had come to Pittsburgh not for the sake of position, but for the good of souls and the weal of Methodism. His honors seemed to sit so lightly upon him, his whole demeanor in public and private was so savory of genuine modesty and deep piety, that, with a quickness and generosity so distinctive of their class, the ministers immediately extended to him the *entente cordiale*, which henceforth made him happy among them. A letter from the seat of the Conference shows as much.

To his wife, Mrs. Annie E. Cookman:

"JOHNSTOWN, PA., June 15, 1855.

"A pleasant ride in company with a number of preachers brought me to this mountain town about eleven o'clock. We immediately proceeded to the Methodist Church, where we found the Pittsburgh Conference transacting business. It was the work of only a few minutes to introduce me formally to the Conference, and for the Conference to receive my money for the superannuated and supernumerary preachers. In presenting this collection, I took occasion to make a few remarks complimentary to the Church which I represent. The brethren generally have extended to me a cordial welcome, and I begin to feel more at home. Yesterday afternoon the Sunday-school anniversary occurred. Addresses were delivered by a Brother Little, of the Erie Conference, Brother Torrence, and Dr. Peck. In the evening Brother Torrence preached in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Brother Williams in the Presbyterian Church. I concluded to hear the latter, and really was very much pleased. Indeed, I doubt if they have a better in the Conference. Strange to tell, I have found some little difficulty in getting one of the magnates to leave the seat of the Conference. Brother Torrence and some member of the Conference will, I think, consent to preach at Christ Church on the Sabbath. The missionary anniversary comes off on Saturday evening, and the brethren, as with one accord, desire and request that I remain to speak and preach on Sabbath morning in the Presbyterian Church.

These services, with a Bible speech on Monday evening, will perhaps make it proper for me to tarry in Johnstown, instead of returning on Saturday, as I had originally intended. I have thought a great deal about you since my departure. My wife and sons are the dearest idols of my affections, and I am never so happy as when I have you by my side. My home in Johnstown is at the house of a Mr. J——, the superintendent of extensive iron-works in this place. The family are recently from Tennessee, and exhibit all the blandness and affection of Southern nature. Bishop Morris, Brothers Hopkins and Torrence, are colleagues in these comforts. The people do the best they can, but, I apprehend, find themselves considerably crowded."

The demands on Mr. Cookman for outside work increased, as from this prominent point the circle of his reputation constantly widened. From all directions the calls for special services flooded his table—requests for dedicating churches, for addresses, lectures, and all kinds of efforts in aid of old and new causes.

An address delivered during this period in Philadelphia, at Music Fund Hall, on behalf of the Bedford Street Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was probably one of the most effective of his life. It was elaborately prepared, and was delivered in his happiest style. The impression was deep, immediate, and abiding. His vehement oratory swept the vast audience whithersoever he listed. He and the cause he pleaded were from that evening, if they had not been previously, thoroughly intrenched in the hearts of the hearers. Back again among his early friends a visitor, he came freighted with the best thoughts he could command, his soul in closest sympathy with missions among the destitute, and his nature fired by old associations and glowing with the love of Jesus, he rose with the hour, the place, the audience; and it was thought by many that they had rarely, if ever, listened to a more powerful, popular address.

The letter which follows, written to his youngest brother, John, now the Rev. John E. Cookman, a member of the New York Conference, will be read with interest. His views on Biblical schools may be regarded by some as behind the times.

Yet the ground of his objections were felt to be weighty by many minds as recently as fifteen years ago. Even now there are a few in other denominations besides the Methodist who have grave questionings as to the positive benefit of the training of theological schools. It is feared by them that it tends to make machine men, to quench native fire; to create generations of preachers who will carry from the seminary too much the tone and manner of a "faculty;" that, while it may produce theologians, it will educate the students too far away from the people to fit them as preachers for the masses, and so raise up ministers for this and coming ages who will not be, in all respects, as effective and successful as those hitherto known in Methodism.

Although it is now conceded that theological schools have become a necessity of the Church, yet I regard it as no discredit to our friend that he cherished and expressed the feelings contained in this letter. It is for those who have the charge of these schools to see to it that his fears and the fears of thousands as sincerely devoted to the Church are not realized. Said Robert Hall of the learned Kippis, "He might be a very clever man by nature, for aught I know, but he laid so many books upon his head that his brains could not move." Vital force, springing from the heart as the motor—the one indispensable condition of effective preaching—was what our friend believed more and more with each succeeding year of his ministry. Goethe says:

> "What you don't feel, you'll never catch by hunting;
> It must gush out spontaneous from the soul;
> And with a fresh delight enchanting
> The hearts of all that hear, control."

To his brother, Mr. John E. Cookman:

"PITTSBURGH, July 22, 1856.

"To say that your letter afforded me great pleasure, expresses but feebly the real feelings of my heart. While I know that you had always associated with your future the work of the ministry, still I began to fear that business and the world were becoming so attractive and absorbing that you would

be diverted from a nobler and more useful sphere. What was my joy, then, to hear from yourself that your present employments failed to satisfy the desires and ambition of your nature, and, in obedience to conscientious convictions, you felt like preparing yourself to do the work of an evangelist.

"From personal experience I know the importance, aye, the necessity of *divine help and strength* in a situation similar to that in which you are placed. Therefore, while I will most cheerfully render you such advice and assistance as may be in my power, at the same time I would impress you with the propriety and advantage of fleeing to the strong for strength. Hide yourself in God. Trust for providential direction, and you shall not stray or stumble. The God of the fatherless, in so important a step as that which you contemplate, will certainly and satisfactorily exhibit a superintending agency, and in the future you will review the whole with gratitude and joy. My first and most fervent counsel, therefore, would be that you yield yourself up *fully* unto God. Let no idol, no secret sin, no unwillingness to toil or sacrifice or suffer, debar you from the full realization of your privileges in the Gospel of God's dear Son. However imperfect your mental and physical developments may seem to yourself, there is no reason why, as a Christian, you should not rival a Fletcher, a McCheyne, a Summerfield, in their almost seraphic purity and zeal and devotion. Attend, then, to the all-important subject of personal piety in the first instance, and I have no fear for the rest. God will overrule all for your benefit and His glory.

"With respect to the importance or advantage of a college course, I am not entirely clear or satisfied. Had you not spent four years in the Philadelphia High-School, I should not be in so much doubt. I remember, however, that you have acquired, to a considerable extent, habits of study; you have obtained pretty general information on the different branches of science, which will serve as a foundation on which to build in the future; you have received regularly and legitimately the degree of A.B., which of course will be followed in due time with an A.M. In these respects you are very far in advance of a large majority of those who are admitted to our Methodist itinerancy. Then, when I think of the associations and influences which are found in most colleges, I tremble lest my cherished brother, for whose success I am so deeply concerned, should be moved off the sure foundation. A Biblical institute, as a substitute for a college, has been presented to my mind, but here again I have my difficulties. I should fear that its influence would be to subdue that enthusiasm which I believe will prove in the future your charm and your power.

"The truth is, I am only about half-persuaded in my mind respecting the advantages of such schools. I compare the genuine Methodist preacher,

whose soul is one blaze of holy zeal—whose mind, self-disciplined, is filled with practical and profitable truth—whose aim is so single that his whole life is a striking commentary upon the sentiment, 'This one thing I do'—who goes through the world like fire through the prairie; I say I compare such a one with a critical, metaphysical, Germanized student of divinity, who, perhaps, looks as blue and feels as cold as if he had been shivering in an ice-house, and who preaches as stiffly as if his lips and heart and arms had all been literally frozen. There is no kind of doubt but I can find self-made men in the Methodist Episcopal Church who are not only equal but superior to others of our own and sister denominations who can boast the advantages of literary and theological training. With respect, however, to this matter, I would not determine for you. If you feel that college studies would increase your mental discipline as no other exercise could, I would not utter a word of discouragement, but rather a hearty '*God-speed!*' I am rather inclined to the conclusion that Brush College, after all, will prove the best school for the development of your physical and intellectual powers. If you could spend the autumn and winter in reading, composing, and exercising as opportunity might offer, and in the spring take an easy circuit, as for instance Village Green or Springfield, I believe that you would accomplish as much for yourself and for the Church as you would by conjugating Latin verbs and studying heathen mythology. If you feel inclined to this latter course, my home and humble services are at your disposal. I appreciate the peculiarity and perplexities of your situation, and, while I scarcely feel prepared to advise, would earnestly counsel that you seek wisdom from God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not."

Mr. Cookman was able to go up to the session of the Pittsburgh Conference in 1856 with a good showing for the year. The number of members had increased from ninety to one hundred and thirty-two, and twenty-six probationers. He reported $738 for the general missionary collection, and $300 for the Bible cause—remarkable advances upon all former contributions. At the seat of the Conference he was called upon to speak, in connection with the Rev. Dr. Durbin and others, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Conference Missionary Society. A correspondent of the Pittsburgh *Christian Advocate* wrote of the speeches:

"The Rev. Alfred Cookman, of Penn Street Church, Pittsburgh, and Dr. John P. Durbin electrified the audience with two of the most powerful

speeches to which it has been our privilege to listen. Cookman is a gifted son of eloquence, and nature has given him a most exuberant fancy. His speeches abound in the most gorgeous imagery, and in this respect he is said to resemble his distinguished father. Of Durbin, as a great thinker and a great orator, it is scarcely necessary to speak. He presented some most striking thoughts on the subject of missions. Cookman's speech might be said to abound with the lightning-flashes of genius, while Durbin followed in one continued thunder-roll of ponderous thought."

The same correspondent noticed Mr. Cookman's sermon on the Sabbath, in the Presbyterian Church, in these terms:

"We would as soon think of daguerreotyping the storm, or with our feeble voice of imitating the roar of the thunder, as to undertake to convey to our readers the impression made by Cookman's sermon. Certain we are that of all who heard it, no one will forget it."

Writing, also, of a Bible speech he made at the same session, he said it was "a speech such as no man but one of his peculiar gifts could make."

These descriptions, while due allowance may be made for the enthusiasm excited by the youth of Mr. Cookman, give proof of the high appreciation in which his gifts were held by one who was probably a member of the Conference. They also show the tireless energy of the young minister in thus standing forward on three important occasions to plead in causes of the first magnitude. Neither then nor afterward did the thought of saving himself or his *capital* ever seem to enter his mind. What he could do for the Master was done to the best of his ability, and there the matter rested.

The following letters reveal the depth of his religious and domestic affections.

To his wife, Mrs. Annie E. Cookman:

"PITTSBURGH, Saturday night, ——, 1856.

"How thankful I was for your letter, breathing so much of true devotion. I assure you that it came to me in my desolation like an angel of light. I need not say that your enthusiastic affection finds the very *warmest* reciprocation in my heart. To say that you are the dearest object of my heart and

life, is to tell the truth but feebly. How I thank God that I was ever permitted to gaze upon your sunny face and claim you as my own. God bless you, precious Annie, and spare your valuable life many, many years.

"Last evening I met all my young members. The room was quite filled with those converted through my unworthy instrumentality. I think they promise not a little to the Church. This afternoon I had the Sabbath-school together. Our meeting was very pleasant and profitable. To my great joy, quite a number of General Conference delegates arrived to-day.* The prospect is that I will be relieved from preaching on the morrow. Dr. Hodgson stayed with me last night, but went on this morning. Dr. McClintock and Rev. A. A. Reese dined at Dr. W.'s to-day. I was one of the invited. * * *

"I am still at Mr. S.'s. They do every thing in their power to render me happy and comfortable. I suppose you are this evening at the Columbia homestead. Two letters mailed during the week would probably await your arrival. Have I not proven a faithful correspondent? Well, I deserve little credit, as it is really no ordinary happiness for me to sit down and commune through even this unsatisfactory medium with her who is all the world to me—especially when I know my letters are adding to your pleasure.

"Kiss my boys for poor papa. Tell them that I intend to bring up their carriage out of the cellar, and have it all ready for their occupancy and use. 'Billy' keeps quiet and well, not objecting to see his little masters. He is all ready for a ride."

To his wife, Mrs. Annie E. Cookman:

"PITTSBURGH, Tuesday afternoon, April 29, 1856.

"Your letter written on Friday evening came to hand on Monday. I feel glad and grateful that our Heavenly Father cares for your health and safety and happiness. Young S—— informed me on Sabbath night that he had seen you and the children on Saturday in Columbia. The very fact that he *had seen* you so recently excited no little interest in my mind. I am managing to *exist* in your absence. It is not living, and yet I bear it because I think that you are happier in the East than you would be *perhaps* in Pittsburgh. You know that your comfort is my rule and constant object. The smoky city, however, is not the worst place in the creation. The people are very kind, and there is a great deal to render a residence here desirable and delightful.

"My friends (the S.'s) are unremitting in their attentions. God forbid that I should forget their friendly treatment.

* On their way to Indianapolis.

"On Sabbath I was relieved from preaching. The Rev. Norval Wilson, of Baltimore, occupied the pulpit in the morning, and the Rev. William Cooper, of Philadelphia, in the evening; two very good sermons. Next Sabbath we commence our afternoon service. Of course *I* deprecate the change.

"You must have had a very charming visit to Philadelphia. It will furnish matter for delightful retrospect and conversation for months to come."

To his brother, Mr. William Wilberforce Cookman, on receiving the news of his conversion:

"PITTSBURGH, February 19, 1857.

"Tuesday's mail brought the most delightful letter I have received for a very long time. It was a letter from dear mother, filled with the details of your conversion. Like our precious parent, I have been specially concerned for your religious welfare. Two or three times this winter I have been on the point of addressing you a few lines. As my protracted meeting has progressed, I have not only thought of you, but in prayer have wrestled for your salvation. How *rejoiced*, then, was I, to learn that you had resolutely espoused the cause of the Saviour, and were triumphing in a consciousness of sins forgiven. Indeed, when I read mother's letter, the fountains of my nature broke open, and I poured forth copious tears of thankfulness and joy. This morning your fraternal epistle came to hand, and, as I glanced over its lines in returning from the post-office, I found that my cup was again running over. Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless and praise His holy name. I am delighted that your experience is of so definite and satisfactory a character. This is desirable, not only because it adds to the sum of our peace at the present, but because it constitutes our conversion a great *landmark* in our life, to which, in future years, we can revert with special pleasure and profit. You may expect in the future to suffer through manifold and powerful temptations; still, if in the midst of the trial you will only maintain your integrity and Christian profession, the temptation or temptations shall really answer a good purpose in establishing your faith and strengthening your godly virtues. It is in the storm or tempest that the sailor learns what he never could have learned if all around had continued calm and prosperous; then, of all times, he is becoming the practiced and thorough seaman. When tempted or tried, remember the Rock that is higher than thou. Go to God; with the simplicity of a son or a child, tell Him all your doubts and fears and desires; plead the promises of His Word; and, as in thousands of instances, so in your case, He will surely make a way for your escape. I need not represent the advantage and importance of a *daily* reading of the Holy Scriptures. This is an exercise

which you appreciate and will observe. Neither need I dwell upon the necessity of frequent prayer. *Morning, noon,* and *night* you will be found before God, pouring your wants and requests into His ever-attentive ear. Have you *joined the Church?* Remember that this is not only a great privilege, but a scriptural duty. You will find within the pale of the Christian Church sympathy and assistance as they can not be found elsewhere. Uniting yourself with a *class,* lay it down as a *principle* or *rule* of your life always to attend when it is possible to go. A man who regularly attends his class-meeting can not very well backslide. Associate with your experience and profession increasing religious *activity.* This sustains the same relation to our *spiritual* life that stated physical exercise does to our natural life. Enter *every avenue of usefulness.* Do all the good in your power. Resolve that the world shall be better for your having lived in it. *My precious brother, my heart goes out after you in sincerest and strongest affection.* You were always *dear* to me because of the noble elements which constitute your nature, but you are *doubly dear* since your regeneration. I feel now that

"'Our hopes and aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares!'

"We may warrantably indulge the delightful hope that *our fraternal love,* overleaping the river of death, will be perpetuated coeval with the existence of the soul.

"I still feel the deepest and liveliest interest in your *secular* affairs. With the blessing of God, which you can now confidently implore and expect, all will be well. Can we not persuade George to give God his heart? If he would yield, then we would be an undivided family in the Church of Jesus Christ. Let us agree to pray for him."

A few brief extracts from Mr. Cookman's pocket-diary of 1856 afford further illustration of his piety and zeal at this period:

"*January* 1.—Attended a Sunday-school convention in the evening, and made a speech. Have realized during the day much peace arising from a sense of entire consecration to God.

"*January* 2.—Preached in the evening from 'Choose ye,' etc. Two came forward for prayers. Some prospect of a revival. My mind is kept in peace while stayed upon God.

"*January* 3.—Spent the morning in my study; visited Mr. F——; exhorted in the evening; two penitents; one conversion. * * * Still realize the comfort growing out of an entire consecration of self to God.

"*January* 4.—Good meeting at night; four at the altar. Still trusting in Christ.

"*January* 6.—Preached in the morning; catechized Sunday-school children in the afternoon; heard Rev. B—— at night. A very precious Sabbath. In the evening enjoyed an unusual baptism of the Spirit.

"*January* 7.—At preachers' meeting realized an unspeakable trust and joy in God. * * * The general class in the evening was a discouraging failure. My confidence in Christ is unabated.

"*January* 8.—A glorious meeting at night; the Church in earnest and eight at the altar. To God be all the glory.

"*January* 9.—My peace still flows as a river; * * * meeting grows in interest; twelve at the altar; two conversions. Oh, for an unprecedented outpouring of the Spirit!

"*January* 10.—Glory to God for the privilege of living in a state of entire consecration; * * * excellent meeting; thirteen or fourteen at the altar.

"*January* 11.—My heart is fixed trusting in the Lord; glorious meeting at night; seventeen at the altar; the members are rallying to the work.

"*January* 12.—Realize great peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; twenty at the penitents' meeting to-day.

"*January* 15.—Met Tract Committee—occupied most of my morning; visited; excellent meeting in the evening; Bishop Simpson with us; fourteen at the altar; two converted. 'Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name!'"

At the close of Mr. Cookman's second year in Pittsburgh, spring of 1857, his return to the Philadelphia Conference was requested and granted. Before dismissing this important term of his ministry, I insert an estimate of his services at Christ Church from the pen of Dr. Wright, a member of its official board:

"For a young man of comparatively little experience as a preacher in charge, to be called to the pastorate of an undertaking from which so much was expected on the one hand, and so much disaster to the cause of Methodism prophesied on the other, gave rise to much discussion as to the propriety of the appointment, many urging that a preacher of more experience would be better.

"Under these somewhat embarrassing circumstances, which were known to our young brother, he came doubting, but *firmly trusting*. When I first met him one cold, dreary, Pittsburgh

March morning, he looked any thing but joyful. I introduced him to my family as our expected young preacher of whom they had heard me speak so often, and was disposed to be cheerful over his coming; but the young preacher was not so disposed, and looked sad, and with a grave expression said: 'I am here to obey orders, but my opinion is that the officiary of your Church have made a mistake in asking my transfer to this important charge. I hope it has been ordered through your prayers, for I feel greatly the need of aid from on high to enter upon the discharge of the duties.' He then spoke of the magnitude of the enterprise, and his belief that the success of such efforts for the future would be determined in a great measure by the first years of their history. Thus believing, he said he felt the weight of the responsibility all the more, that its organization should be a success in every way, especially in the salvation of sinners and the upbuilding of the Church for good.

"He entered upon his duties as the first pastor of Christ Methodist Episcopal Church the following Sabbath, and preached to a crowded house from the 6th chapter and 14th verse of Galatians, 'God forbid,' etc. The cross of Christ and the atoning blood of the Lamb, ever beautiful and powerful to save, was the burden of his theme on that day. The timid young man of the day before was now as bold in the annunciation of the truths that centre around the cross as Paul, whom he so much loved, and upon whose character he loved to dwell. If there had been any doubts about the propriety of calling the young brother to the new charge, they were all dispelled by the impression produced upon the minds and hearts of his first congregation. A good, happy brother was asked, on coming out of church, what he thought of the sermon: 'Ah!' he replied, 'there is no German silver about that—it has the true ring of the genuine metal.'

"In the organization of Christ Church membership from the various Methodist congregations in Pittsburgh, Brother Alfred

Cookman performed a delicate task, in which he acted with the good sense and judgment of more mature years and experience. Under the inspiration of his consecration to the work of the salvation of sinners, Alfred Cookman developed while at Christ Church some of the noblest traits of his manhood, and showed what was possible when the man is devoted to his Master's work. The fervor of his longings for the conversion of sinners was always marked by a deep and loving pathos, expressed with singular beauty and propriety of language, that rarely failed in making a deep and lasting impression. The congregations that waited upon his ministry while in Pittsburgh were large—often so crowded that persons had to leave for want of room.

"One of the elements of his great success in Pittsburgh was his love and devotion to the Sabbath-school interests of the Church. He organized a large school, and never did he seem more in his element than when working among the children; and never was there a body of children who seemed to be happier and gave more attention than when he was talking to them—either in examining them in their catechism, illustrating their scriptural lesson, or in telling some story that pointed a moral which was always fixed in their minds by some appropriate illustration.

"Many of the children of the school came early under the influence of religion, gave their names to the Church, and Brother Alfred lived long enough to see several of the boys thus brought to Christ preachers, two of whom are now in the Baltimore Conference.

"In his devotion to the Sabbath-school interests of Christ Church he was ably assisted by his excellent wife, who had charge of the infant class-room. In all of his responsible duties and relations to Christ Church he was ever faithful to the great trust imposed upon him, and his Master abundantly blessed and honored him with great success in bringing a large and

influential membership together, and establishing an objective point for Methodism in Pittsburgh.

"He impressed the large and wealthy congregation with the importance and duty of contributing generously of their means. The after-history of this Church shows that they have not forgotten his injunction, but have gone on increasing their gifts, till now Christ Church stands among the first in the Methodist Episcopal Church as a contributor to all the interests of the Church."

Two letters written subsequently from Pittsburgh to his wife present a very grateful proof of Mr. Cookman's attachment to the Christ Church friends as well as of their affection for him. They were written when he was on a visit to Pittsburgh:

"PITTSBURGH, Monday morning.

"I have time for a few lines. Despite the storm and gloomy prospect, I started from Harrisburg on Saturday afternoon, and without detention reached Pittsburgh about two A. M. on Sabbath morning. The *Union Hotel* is a part of the Pennsylvania dépôt, and there I made myself comfortable until church-time. Brother K—— called for me in his carriage about ten o'clock, and we proceeded together to Christ Church. The snow-storm still continuing, influenced the congregation, but notwithstanding we had the house well filled. I had a blessed time in preaching. The friends flocked enthusiastically around. We have no warmer friends than these large-hearted Pittsburghers. The M.'s would take me in their splendid carriage to their elegant home for dinner. In the afternoon I addressed the Sunday-school; then supped at James B.'s, who has a beautiful home on Penn Street, and in the evening preached again to a congregation larger than that gathered in the morning. This evening I preach again, and leave in the ten P. M. train for Harrisburg. Pittsburgh is sharing at this time wonderful revival influences. The daily prayer-meetings are held in the largest churches, and are crowded with interested persons. I observed Mrs. Simpson and Miss Ella in my congregation yesterday. This morning I propose to step in and pay them my respects. Mrs. H—— was in her pew clad in the deepest mourning. I of course will call on her during the day. The P—— family were all in their places, and exceedingly kind. The K.'s have moved farther out. They have a nicer home than before. Whether that —— will come is doubtful, but this morning God gave me sweetly this Scripture

—'Why take you thought for raiment,' etc. 'For *your Heavenly Father knoweth* that ye have need of these things.' This was so delightful that I can leave the whole matter. * * * My soul is full of love for and trust in Jesus. In a spiritual sense all is well. My soul is clothed in a spotless robe that never wears out. Glory to the Lamb! The people here are very anxious to see you. They speak of you with true, warm, deep love."

"PITTSBURGH, Friday morning, 12 o'clock, 1868.

"Here I am in smoky Pittsburgh, smoky enough—never smokier. We left Philadelphia last evening at eight o'clock. My berth was wide and clean and comfortable. I lay down about ten P.M., rested delightfully, and rose this morning about seven, as we were descending the mountain. At half-past nine we alighted at the Pittsburgh dépôt, and proceeded to B.'s office; found him in his arm-chair, and received a brother's welcome. He secured for me a pass to and from Chicago, so that my railroad expenses will not bankrupt me. I have called this morning on a number of brethren, who express undiminished love for their former pastor. A little while ago I wandered through the church, the place of my former ministrations; saw the house where Frank was born—the stone steps where dear Brunie would await me when I was returning from the East. The rush of memories nearly overpowered me. More of Pittsburgh when we meet. The wedding yesterday was a grand affair. No expense was spared. The company was not very large; the entertainment superb. M—— looked and behaved beautifully. Her husband impressed me most favorably. They went off in the half-past six train to take possession of their new and elegant home in Brooklyn. A beautiful wreath was presented for Mrs. Cookman, and a basket of flowers for her husband. Last, but not least, the fee was ——. I have carefully placed it in my watch-pocket. and, if the temptation is not too strong to spend it, I will let you pick my pocket on my return. I am very well this morning, and expect to start for Chicago in the two o'clock train, reaching my destination about eleven o'clock to-morrow morning. It is a long journey, and I expect to get enough of it to last me a lifetime. Mr. Punshon is in Chicago; *preaches there to-day.* I hope, however, to hear him on the Sabbath. Oh, if my darling wife was only with me, then I should be entirely satisfied. Your joy is my joy, and I know you would be delighted to travel with your itinerant husband. I am with you in spirit almost constantly, and fervently ask our kind Heavenly Father to watch over you during our absence one from another. Love to all the friends. Kiss my dear children for their papa. Tell them to be kind and quiet and good."

The Rev. W. M. Paxton, D.D., now of New York, who was the

pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh when Mr. Cookman was at Christ Church, has furnished a very pleasing testimony to the excellence of his character and the usefulness of his ministry. After referring to some of the difficulties which Mr. Cookman had to meet, he says:

"He, however, proved himself fully equal to the emergency. I now look back with admiration upon the masterly manner in which he met all these difficulties, and turned hostility into friendship. His humble, unpretending manner disarmed prejudice; his sincere, honest heart inspired confidence; his loving, gentle spirit won the affection of the people; and his able and eloquent preaching gave him a high place in the estimation of the public. His success became apparent upon the first day the church was opened, and before the close of the first year he had dissipated all opposition, gathered around him a large and influential congregation, and established himself in the regard of the whole community. At the end of one year, when his first term of service expired, such was the desire, not only of his own congregation but of the whole community, to retain his services, that the bishops were constrained to renew his appointment.

"His whole work in Pittsburgh was admirable in every way. He organized his congregation well, preached well, and was instrumental in the conversion of many souls. But, beyond all this, he had a large catholic spirit, which brought him into useful fellowship with his brethren of other denominations, and enlisted him in every good work. He was in every sense a Methodist, but he was not a narrow denominationalist; and, above all, he had nothing in his heart to keep him from rejoicing in the success of another's work.

"His residence in Pittsburgh being within two doors of my own, an intimacy sprang up between us, which soon ripened into a warm and lasting friendship. The more I knew of him the more I loved him. He had an honest heart that inspired trust,

and made me feel that all his expressions, either of opinion or friendship, could be relied upon. His religion was deep, earnest, and controlling. He believed in heart religion because he had an experience of it, and out of the abundance of his heart his mouth spoke. With him religion was a pervading principle, controlling all thought and action. 'He walked with God.' He realized more than most Christians the personal presence of the Saviour, and had many blessed seasons of high and holy communion as on the Mount. It was upon this rich treasury of heart experience that he drew largely for his sermons. His spontaneous conversation was upon religion; it was in his heart, and he delighted to talk of it. I have many precious recollections of such conversations. He was in all his views and convictions a Methodist, and yet in his experience he was so much of a Calvinist that we had many 'good times together.'"

The subjoined characterization of Mr. Cookman and his work appeared at the time of his leaving Pittsburgh in one of the daily papers of the city:

"Rev. Alfred Cookman has been with us but two years, yet in that short time he has indelibly impressed us with his sincerity as a Christian, his worth as a gentleman, and his ability as a pulpit orator. To his value as a Christian, his life and zeal in the cause he assumes testifies. Of his worth as a gentleman, the many and warm attachments formed during his short residence with us are the assurances. Of his ability as an orator, the large and discriminating audiences which have attended him are the very best evidences.

"Viewing the tenets of his Church in a spirit of liberality, austerity has not characterized his teaching; inspired with the social value of courtesy, his etiquette has not been based upon an exclusive code. Carefully regarding the end in view, he has not perverted the gifts of oratory to the gratification of vanity. But subordinating every thing to the objects of his ministry, he has worthily maintained the dignity of the Christian teacher. Ignoring fanaticism in religion, he has not failed to discharge his duties as a citizen. Marking the nice distinction between Christian morality and political ethics, he has saved his congregation the scandal too many have suffered where the

sanctuary has been desecrated by the introduction of party issues. Yet, with an ardent patriotism that finds a fitting response within the hearts of all who love their country, and which rises too far above mere party to be subjected to its criticism, he has pointed out the breakers which threaten our noble Ship of State, and conjured us by his eloquence to cling to the Bible as the only compass by which she may be safely directed.

"For all this we regret his loss. Succumbing to its necessity, we can only, with the poet, bid him

> "'Go, speed the stars of thought
> On to their shining goals;
> The sower scatters broad his seed,
> *The wheat thou strewest be souls.*'"

He and his family took their final leave of Pittsburgh at the midnight hour. So intense was the feeling at parting with them, that large numbers of their friends formed a procession and accompanied them to the dépôt, where they took the train for Philadelphia.

CHAPTER XII.

MINISTRY AT GREEN STREET CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.—REMARKABLE REVIVAL.

MR. COOKMAN'S return to Philadelphia was heartily received by his brethren of the Conference and the laymen of the city. The Green Street charge was especially favored in securing his services as their pastor. His fame as a preacher and his efficiency as a worker had greatly augmented since he had left Kensington Station, and his advent to the city was adapted to awaken much delight and expectation. The Green Street Church was a new, tasteful, and commodious building, with free seats, situated among a dense population, and offered every advantage for the popular talents of the zealous pastor. He was now perfectly in his element. With loving kindred and genial friends about him, a comfortable, though not pretentious home, a large and enthusiastic society of helpers, a crowded and sympathizing congregation, he entered upon a career of popularity and usefulness which may be regarded as an epoch in his ministry.

It is doubtful if Philadelphia Methodism has known in its whole history a pastoral term of two years more signally fraught with proofs of the divine favor and the stable results of evangelical ministrations than these of our friend at Green Street. The scenes under his preaching—the perpetual blaze of revival, the marked cases of conversion and sanctification—were more like the occurrences of primitive Methodism, and showed conclusively that the ancient glory had not departed from the sons of the fathers. At the close of his second year he reported seven hundred members and one hundred and fourteen proba-

tioners—a net gain of two hundred and thirty-five persons—with large advances in all the collections for benevolent objects, especially in that for the missionary cause.

As an explanation in part of the eminent success of Mr. Cookman at Green Street, it may be said that it took place during the great religious revival of 1857 and 1858. An awakening seldom paralleled pervaded all classes of society and churches of every communion, extending from the cities to the country districts, until there was not a hamlet, however remote, which did not feel its power. Waves of divine blessing, in rapid succession, rolled over the land; religion was at the flood—it was the theme on every lip; men turned aside from the busy mart at the hour of noon, and thronged the places of prayer; the workshop, the drinking-saloon, the theatre, the highway, became consecrated places, where the voice of singing and of supplication from earnest penitents and exultant converts was heard; the sanctuaries were crowded with men and women, asking what they must do to be saved; not alone the women and children, but men—strong, wicked men, who hitherto had neither regarded man nor feared God—mourned for their sins, and rejoiced in the freedom of forgiveness; ministers whose popularity had declined were invested with new favor, and the different denominations, that had been until recently either antagonistic or indifferent, were suddenly fused into a thorough union and co-operation.

Mr. Cookman knew enough to put himself abreast this divine flood, and to move with it. Neither the general spirit of revival nor his tact can wholly explain his success.

It is proper to call attention to an important fact of personal experience, which rendered his ministry at Green Street, in his own opinion, the most pregnant period of his history. It will be remembered that within a few months after obtaining the evidence of "perfect love," through inadvertency he lost it. Through these years his position on this great

subject had not been at all satisfactory to himself. It had been hesitating. Doubts, questionings had disturbed his mind; and though he was mainly in sympathy with the doctrine of "full salvation," still there was neither a definite view nor a settled experience. His ministry was acceptable and useful; he was truly devoted to God and His cause, but yet he was ill at ease, and his soul, under a deep sense of unrealized power, was often sorrowful. The war of contending feelings marred his peace and frittered his strength; something he needed to lift him out of this conflict, and to develop all the resources of his spiritual nature into the utmost unity and force. The Spirit of God was gently but surely leading him backward and forward at the same time—backward to the simple, child-like faith in which he stood at Newtown, and forward to the same faith, re-enforced by an experience which could more fully guard it, through a knowledge of the errors that caused its forfeiture, and the memory of the bitterness which that forfeiture had entailed.

Whatever had been lost during these ten years of comparative failure, all was not lost. I do not mean that simply a saved, justified condition had been maintained; this no one can question; but I mean that there had been progress in the deeper knowledge of God's Word, in the more thorough insight to his own heart, in the increased confidence in the agencies of the Gospel, acquired by a longer and broader observation—all of which constituted preparations for that subsequent experience which in its marks and results became so signal and abiding. To one who has gained some great height by untrodden and devious paths, there may seem a much straighter course when he looks back over the broad sweep through which he has passed; but he can not say that any step, much less which step, has been useless in the successive steps that have brought him to the eminence on which he stands.

There is a certain positiveness in a knowledge which is worked out for one's self, to which the soul comes through its own prov-

ings amid doubts, fears, temptations, that imparts a conviction of truthfulness, a tenacity of purpose, which is an indispensable element in him who in any sense is to be a leader in God's advanced hosts. The stand which Alfred Cookman was about to take at Green Street for the doctrine of "perfect love" would be quite a different stand from that which he took on Attleboro Circuit in the first inexperienced months of his ministry; not different in the nature of the work accomplished, nor in the evidences accompanying it, but in the increased capacity which he would have to understand, to hold, and to propagate it. Thenceforth neither the jokes of his brethren nor the arguments of those who, either for cavil or conscience, saw fit to differ with him, would be able to move him.

It was not a necessity that he should have lost the witness of entire sanctification, much less that he should have continued so long a time without its restoration, but it is a significant fact in the history of many of those who have received this witness that they seldom remain from the beginning uninterruptedly in its possession and enjoyment. From want of a full perception of the conditions of the higher order of life, from a defect of judgment which can be corrected only by experience, the soul which has rejoiced in the evidence of love made perfect not unfrequently comes under a darkness which is more or less protracted. One of the most merciful provisions of Christianity is that all believers, of whatever stage of attainment or degree of faith, may so long as they live learn by the things which they suffer, and be corrected by their very mistakes. It is of God's infinite wisdom and goodness so to sanctify to the good man even his errors, that by them he shall rise into a corrected and purer life.

In the summer of 1856, while at Pittsburgh, Mr. Cookman entered into a covenant with God, which began to give shape to his subsequent experience:

"Restlessly anxious to enjoy an abiding witness of entire

sanctification to God, fully satisfied that this is not only a high and holy privilege, but a solemn and peremptory obligation, *I*, Alfred Cookman, on this 16th day of July, 1856, do record the following covenant, with a humble reliance on supernatural help to assist me in fulfilling it:

"1. I will considerately, solemnly, cheerfully, fully devote myself to God, consecrating the various faculties of my mind and body, together with the different talents which the providence of God has blessed me with.

"2. I will endeavor to remember that a strict and constant self-denial is a principal element of the Christian character; hence, without reference to my own will or inclination, I will consent to be governed by God's revealed truth and the inward illumination of His Holy Spirit.

"To particularize some points of duty:

"Finding that I can not habitually use tobacco with a clear conscience, I will resolve to abstain from it altogether.

"I will endeavor to be more prompt and energetic in the discharge of all my duties.

"Teaching, as I do, the advantage and efficiency of prayer, I will myself seek to commune more frequently and intimately with God.

"In my intercourse with society, I will endeavor to be more spiritual in my conversation, keeping in view constantly the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

"I will study the spirit and character of my Saviour, and labor to possess all the mind which was in Christ Jesus my Lord.

"I will frequently give this covenant a prayerful perusal.

"Now, how can I conform to this standard unless assisted by the blessed Spirit? Feebler than a bruised reed, I shall certainly fail unless helped from above. Oh, Eternal Father, for the alone sake of the Saviour, give me the Holy Spirit to strengthen me with might in my inner man, that I may be able

to glorify Thee in my body and spirit, which I this day consecrate to Thee."

As joints to stalks, condensing their substance and giving firmness for the support of further growth; as knots in the threads, binding them into unity and strength as hither and thither they cross each other in weaving the fisher's net, so the covenants of good men gather up their otherwise scattered resources, and compact them into the higher forms of spiritual efficiency.

I give in his own words the account of his restoration to this great scriptural blessing:*

"Oh, how many precious years I wasted in quibbling and debating respecting the great differences, not seeing that I was antagonizing a doctrine which must be spiritually discerned, and the tendency of which is to bring people nearer God. Meanwhile I had foolishly fallen into the habit of using tobacco, an indulgence which, while it afforded, palatably, gratification, at the same time seemed to satisfy both my nervous and social nature. Years elapsed. When I would confront the obligation of entire consecration, the sacrifice of my foolish habit would be presented as a test of obedience; I would consent. Light, strength, and blessing were the result. Afterward temptation would be presented. I would listen to suggestions like this: 'This is one of the good things of God; your religion does not require a course of asceticism; this indulgence is not specifically forbidden in the New Testament; some good people whom you know are addicted to this practice,' thus seeking to quiet an uneasy conscience. I would draw back into the old habit again. After a while I began to see that the indulgence at best was *doubtful for me*, and that I was giving my carnality rather than my Christian experience the benefit of the doubt. It could not harm me to give it up, while to persist in the practice was costing me too much in my religious enjoyment.

* Substantially as published in "The Guide to Holiness," New York.

"I found that after all my objections to sanctification as a distinct work of grace, there was nevertheless a conscious lack in my own religious experience—it was not strong, round, full, abiding. I frequently asked myself, 'What is that I need and desire in comparison with what I have and profess?' I looked at the three steps insisted upon by the friends of holiness, namely: 'First, entire consecration; second, acceptance of Jesus moment by moment as a perfect Saviour; third, a meek and definite profession of the grace received,' and I said 'these are scriptural and reasonable duties.'

"The remembrance of my experience in Newtown supplied an overwhelming confirmation of all this, and at the same time a powerful stimulant in the direction of duty. What then? 'I will cast aside all preconceived theories, doubtful indulgences, and culpable unbelief, and retrace my steps.' Alas! that I should have wandered from the light at all, and afterward wasted so many years in vacillating between self and God. Can I ever forgive myself? Oh, what bitter, bitter memories! The acknowledgment I make is constrained by candor and a concern for others. It is the greatest humiliation of my life. If I had the ear of those who have entered into the clearer light of Christian purity, I would beseech and charge them with a brother's interest and earnestness that they be warned by my folly. Oh, let such consent to die, if it were possible, ten deaths before they willfully depart from the path of holiness; for, if they retrace their steps, there will still be the remembrance of original purity tarnished, and that will prove a drop of bitterness in the cup of their sweetest comfort.

"Eternal praise to my long-suffering Lord, nearly ten years have elapsed since, as the pastor of Green Street Church in the city of Philadelphia, I again carefully and fully dedicated my all to God, the consecration of course including the doubtful indulgence. I said, 'I will try to abstain for Christ's sake; I trust I would do any thing for His sake, and certainly I can consent

to this self-denial that Jesus may be glorified.' I again accepted Christ as my Saviour from all sin, realized the witness of the same Spirit, and since then have been walking in the light as God is in the light, realizing that experimental doctrine of the fellowship and communion with saints, and humbly and gratefully testify that the blood of Jesus cleanseth me from all sin. 'As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him;' that is, as I understand, 'Maintain the same attitude before God you assumed when you accepted Christ as your all-sufficient Saviour.' I received Him in a spirit of entire consecration, implicit faith, and humble confession. The constant repetition of these three steps, I find, enables me to walk in Him. I can not afford for a single moment ever to remove my offering, to fail in looking unto Jesus, or to part with the spirit of confession.

"Thus I have honestly unfolded some personal experience in connection with the higher life; the recital humbles me in the dust, as it calls up the memory of years of vacillating and unsatisfactory religious life, but it also fills me with the profoundest gratitude for that abounding grace which not only bore with me, but brought me to see again my privilege in the Gospel, and now for ten years has been preserving me in the experience and blessing, and in the profession of this great grace. Precious reader, I now offer you the testimony; but mark, before it meets your eye it has been carefully placed upon the Altar that sanctifieth the gift, and an earnest prayer offered that it may be blessed to your spiritual profit. As you lay down this humble article, will you not, for your own sake and for the Church's sake, resolve to be entirely and eternally the Lord's? God help and bless you."

The candor, directness, and fervor which pervade this statement must commend it to every one. The "Tobacco Test" was for himself alone; the use of tobacco was in *his* way, in the full consecration which he sought to make to God; he

did not pretend to raise it as a question for any one else. With him whatsoever is not of faith is sin; what he could not do conscientiously, he could not do at all; but he would have others to think and act for themselves in doubtful matters, believing that every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind. Mr. Cookman, in the presentation of the Christian life, was the farthest removed from a narrow and censorious spirit; he never raised artificial conditions; was not given to the specifying of isolated acts either of self-denial or performance, but rather inculcated a broad, deep, thorough devotion, under whose enlightened impulse he was sure the new-born, or the wholly sanctified soul, would adjust itself to the divine requirements. It was of little consequence to him whether a brother accepted literally his methods or opinions on minor points of personal habit, so he had the root of holiness, and showed in his life its essential fruits. Here was a point which aided not a little to give him influence over all classes of minds.

Nothing can possibly exceed the emphasis with which our friend was henceforth committed to the doctrine of "perfect love." "Heart purity"—a favorite expression with him—was from this time to the close of his life the distinctive theme of his ministry; not, however, to the exclusion of other topics, but as comprehending all phases of Christian truth, penetrating and vivifying them with its light. It absorbed his best thoughts; it was the burden of his ablest sermons; it was that which was best in him as a man; his whole being was permeated with its unction; at home or abroad, in the pulpit or the social circle, in the study or by the sea-shore, at the altar of prayer or by the sick-bed, the instinct of his soul, the atmosphere of his life, was "Holiness to the Lord."

In connection with his preaching talents, his skill as an administrator of Church affairs, his aptitude with the Sunday-school, and his engaging manners, this rebaptism with the Spirit of power at Green Street was most opportune. It fully equip-

ped him as a good soldier of Christ for the arduous and eventful campaign which lay before him. What a pity it is that the details of a pastorate so replete with incident and instruction are almost wholly lost for the want of any proper record. The words spoken, the deeds done, are bearing fruit in souls, and their only transcript is the holy and happy lives they helped to form.

The revival spoken of began during the first winter (1857–8) of Mr. Cookman's ministry at Green Street. I extract a few entries from his pocket-diary as indicative of the progress of the work for January and February:

"*January* 1, 1858.—The first day of a new year. Oh, that it may prove the best day of my life! Our watch-night was solemn and profitable. Delivered an address this afternoon at a Sabbath-school anniversary.

"*January* 3.—Preached in the morning on 'Having a mind to work.' Eight joined—four probation, four certificate. Made a Sabbath-school address in the afternoon. Preached at night on 'The loss of the soul.' A solemn meeting; fourteen at the altar; two professed conversion. To God be all the glory!

"*January* 4.—Greatly exhausted to-day. Attended a funeral. Twenty at the altar. Brother Coombe preached for me—'Work out,' etc. Two young men converted. Praise the Lord, O my soul!

"*January* 5.—Spent most of the day in the court-room, to which I had been summoned as a witness. Brother Coombe preached a powerful sermon from 'Pure and undefiled religion.' Seventeen or eighteen at the altar, twelve of whom professed conversion.

"*January* 6.—Wasted a good part of the day at court. Led a large class. Called on Mr. and Mrs. R——. Preached at night from 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.' Sixteen at the altar; three professed conversion.

"*January* 7.—Trial still pending. Led a large class. Brother Coombe preached—'If only we have hope.' Twelve at the altar; three converted.

"*January* 8.—Wasted a good deal of time at the court-room. Brother Milby preached at night; only two forward. O Lord, revive Thy work!

"*January* 9.—Visited court-room in the morning; attended Old Folks' concert in the afternoon; spent the evening in my study—not very well.

"*Sunday, January* 10.—Preached, with unusual liberty, on the subject of entire self-consecration. Administered the sacrament in the afternoon.

Fourteen joined the Church on probation, two by certificate. Brother Coombe preached at night; five at the altar; one converted. A good day.

"*January* 11.—Attended preachers' meeting; spent a good part of the day in the court-room. Brother Dunham preached very acceptably at night from 'One thing is needful,' etc. Five at the altar; one blessed. Letter from Trenton.

"*January* 13.—Brother Coombe preached; seven or eight forward; two converted.

"*January* 14.—Brother R. Humphries preached; eight or nine at the altar; two converted.

"*January* 15.—Brother Jennings preached; ten at the altar; two converted.

"*January* 16.—God has given me my first daughter. Oh, how multiplied are Heaven's mercies!

"*January* 17.—Preached with considerable liberty on the 'Horrible pit,' etc. Heard Dr. Stockton in the afternoon. Preached again at night on the solemn subject of 'Death.' Twelve at the altar; one converted. Glory to God!

"*January* 18.—Dr. Cook preached for me at night; fourteen at the altar; four converted.

"*January* 19.—Lectured in Trenton, N. J.; a pleasant visit. Dr. Cook preached for me; twelve at the altar.

"*January* 20.—Returned from Trenton; wrote letters to ——; love-feast at night; a precious season; ten or twelve at the altar; one or two conversions.

"*January* 21.—Preparing material for a charity sermon. Led a large class. Brother J. Thomson preached for me at night—a capital discourse. Twelve or eighteen at the altar; one converted.

"*January* 22.—Wrote to B. F. J., L. W. K., E. M. H. Called on Helen P., W. G. S., and Captain S. Dr. Alday preached an excellent sermon from 'God be merciful,' etc. Twelve or thirteen at the altar.

"*January* 21.—Received a letter from Washington.

"*January* 24.—Preached in the morning on the duty of systematic beneficence; collection $200. In the evening on 'Ho! every one that thirsteth;' twenty at the altar—a number of young men; one converted. To God be all the glory.

"*January* 26.—Went to market. Accomplished little in my study. Visited. Brother Curtis preached from 'Come unto me,' etc.; sixteen at the altar; four converted. Glory be to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"*January* 27.—Preached at night from 'I have a message,' etc. One of the best meetings we have had; fifteen or eighteen forward for prayers; four or five blessed.

"*January* 28.—Very sick, one of my bilious attacks, with cold—under the care of the physician. Brother J. Thomson preached; two or three converted.

"*January* 29.—Considerably better to-day, but greatly prostrated. Brother Fernly preached.

"*January* 30.—Nothing special. Far from being well.

"*January* 31.—Preached in the morning from 'Ye call me Lord and Master,' etc. John preached for me at night. A most solemn and interesting occasion; eight or ten forward; one blessed."

I give a few extracts for the month of February:

"*February* 6.—Started for Washington; spent an hour or two in Baltimore; reached our place of destination about five in the afternoon; cordially received.

"*February* 7.—Preached the dedication sermon of Waugh Chapel; considerable liberty. John preached in the afternoon; Brother Dashiell in the evening; upward of $1500 raised. A good day.

"*February* 8.—Visited the Capitol, Smithsonian, etc. Heard a most exciting discussion in the Senate, and saw many friends. Lectured at night in the Foundry Church.

"*February* 9.—Returned home; all well. Heard of Bishop Waugh's death. Patterson preached at night; four blessed.

"*February* 12.—Eighteen at the altar.

"*February* 14.—Preached a missionary sermon in the morning—'What think ye of Christ?' A good day.

"*February* 15.—Preachers' meeting; general class; twenty-five at the altar; four or five converted.

"*February* 16.—Lectured in the Kensington Church in behalf of the Soup Society. Brother Seys preached at night; three or four blessed.

"*February* 17.—Fifteen at the altar; seven converted.

"*February* 21.—A triumphant day. Brother Hagany and Bishop Janes both preached admirably. $1500 will probably be our missionary contribution.

"*February* 22.—Preachers' meeting; dined at mother's; good meeting at night; eight at the altar; one or two converted.

"*February* 23.—Wrote to S. Thomas; attended Helen P.'s funeral; was present at a meeting of the Board of Managers of the Tract Society."

Here this fragmentary diary closes. I present it as showing not only the progress of the revival, but also the busy life of the young city pastor. Religious services night after night, with all the taxing cares of a great awakening; special services in the city and abroad, in lectures for feeble societies and dedicatory sermons for new churches. Elastic as was his physical frame, he is seen sometimes almost sinking under sickness, yet he scarcely stops his arduous labors, but gets well "in the harness." In the midst of these engrossing parochial cares he was touching the religious community at all points, was well-nigh ubiquitous in all city evangelical movements. Alfred Cookman was then, as always, a man of sheer hard work and of all work. He shunned no task however severe or forbidding.

I have at hand a report of one of his sermons preached during this great revival. Its insertion is in point, as tending to illustrate the style of his extemporaneous discourses, and the character of those thrilling home-thrust appeals by which he roused the consciences of his hearers:

"'*Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.*'

"These words, contained in St. Luke's Gospel, twelfth chapter and twentieth verse, constitute the subject of a sermon preached last Sabbath evening in the Methodist Church, Green Street, below Eleventh, by the pastor, Rev. Alfred Cookman.

"Mr. Cookman is among the youngest members of the ministry of Philadelphia, and so too among the most promising of their number. His genius seems to be eagle-winged, soaring aloof from either notes or manuscript, and pouring itself out in an easy-flowing stream of eloquence, as sublime in its flights as it is forcible in argument.

"The popular appreciation of this promising young preacher is well expressed in the immense audiences which usually throng the church in which he is stationed. On the present occasion the house was literally crowded. In attempting a synopsis of his able discourse, however, we shall endeavor rather to preserve the chain of his argument than to give a faithful transcript on paper of his style of oratory. * * *

"The speaker here announced that the special point of inquiry to which he desired to call the attention of his hearers was,

'IN WHAT DID THIS MAN'S FOLLY CONSIST.'

"'The most degrading epithet to be found in the vocabulary of language had been applied to the subject referred to in the parable.

"'Such an expression ("thou fool"), coming from the source it did, must have had sufficient reason to sustain it. But here arose the difficulty. The great principle intended to be taught by this parable the reasoning of the *world* was not prepared to receive. Here, indeed, was the issue. The judgment of God was arrayed against the judgment of unconverted man.

"'To proceed, however, with the investigation into the folly of this rich owner of certain lands, we should probably be told, *first*—in vindication of his course—that he had been a *rich man;* and it was an undisputable fact that *riches covered a multitude of sins!* He knew, from the fact that rich men were almost universally lauded for their wisdom, that the process of fastening the charge of folly upon so distinguished a one of their number was no idle undertaking. Again, it would be plead in his behalf that he had been industrious and persevering, and had, as a consequence, reaped an abundant harvest as his reward; but the question here arose, "Do enterprise and wisdom, in all cases, constitute synonymous terms?" He thought not. Moreover, he would probably be accounted a wise man because he had *taken thought*, within himself, as to "what he should do."

"'Yes, he had taken thought, and the conclusion of his thoughts had been that he would build new barns, and on announcing this resolution he did not doubt but that he had been regarded as the very wisest man in all that region. But, again, the world would give him credit for acting *wisely*, in that he had resolved to enjoy himself with the good things he had accumulated all the rest of his days—for having taken a resolution, probably, of associating with him in his enjoyments a few select boon companions, who should revel with him in the delight he was then picturing to his soul.'

"Here the speaker saw pictured before his imagination the phantom of this prince reclining upon his silken couch at the dead hour of night, revolving in his mind the glorious future that awaited him. This delineation was at once artistic, eloquent, and thrilling. 'It was at the dead hour of night: the laborers of his fields were soundly slumbering in other apartments of his splendid dwelling; but sleep on her airy pinions came not to woo his wakeful soul to regions of repose. No, no—his mind was too much engaged in counting over the vastness of his wealth; picturing before his excited vision the full-grown proportions of his newly conceived barns; devising the magnificent entertainments with which he meant to regale his admiring friends. So his soul was wandering into the treacherous regions of the undiscovered future, counting up the years of pleasure yet to come, when lo! suddenly as

the lightning's flash, a voice aroused him—a voice from a quarter least expected and most dreaded thundered in his ear the terrible doom—"THIS NIGHT!—*thy soul shall be required of thee!*"

"'Never had Belshazzar been more terrified when the miraculous hand had written his doom upon the wall of his banqueting-chamber than had this rich man been at this midnight announcement. Never had Saul of Tarsus been more awe-struck when at the gates of Damascus he had been stricken sightless from his horse by a light from heaven, than had this man been on hearing his unlooked-for doom at this silent hour of the night. And well it might be so. His transition from the regions of his vision into the vestibule of eternity, in a single instant, and the certainty that before the rosy dawn of morn he should appear in the presence of a sin-judging Jehovah, were enough to have wrung from his lips the burning confession—"'Tis true, I am a FOOL indeed!"

"'But he would ask again, Wherein did his folly most particularly appear?

"'His answer to this would be, first, "*Because he had forgotten the claims of God!*" He had undertaken to arrange for himself a train of future happiness—had begun the work of hewing out for himself "broken cisterns that could hold no water"—had lost sight of the *living* pleasures of the future—was indeed basking in pleasures to some extent of which God does not wish to deprive his children; but the matter which pre-eminently stamped him as a fool was *that he had forgotten the Author of all his mercies.*

"'When he had retired at night, good angels had long watched around his couch, but they heard no voice of thankfulness offered to their Father in Heaven. Others had mourned in penitence over their transgressions, but he had no tears to shed over his sins; others had plead for favors from the Divine Hand, but he had no prayer to offer; others had prayed for light to see the truth, but he had no such desire, for "he loved darkness rather than light, because his deeds were evil;" and from all this it was that the appellation of "fool" had been justly applied to him.

"'But his folly was apparent, in the *second place*, because *he had forgotten the claims of his soul.*

"'He had said, "Soul, take thine ease," and herein had been committed his capital mistake. What an insult to the soul was this! to undertake to satisfy the future longings of the soul by offering it a species of gratification that would be equally tempting to a brute!

"'"A fool!" exclaims the objector, with perfect astonishment, "and did he not assiduously employ his thinking faculties? did he not ask within himself what he should do?" Yes, he admitted that he had asked this question;

and had it been in his (the speaker's) province to reply, he should have answered him, "feed the hungry and clothe the naked;" but his inquiry had not been what he should do *to be saved*, but what he should do for his body. All his inquiries had been concerning matters confined to this world, entirely forgetting the capacities and duration of the soul.' Here the speaker inserted an emphatic pause, and then continued, that he 'hoped all his hearers would duly consider the value of an immortal soul — and withal consider well the uncertain character of its earthly pilgrimage. Poised, as it were, upon a little point of time, with heaven above, hell beneath, and eternity beyond, requiring but the slightest vibration of Jehovah's breath to blow it away forever!

"'To neglect this, no matter what might be our earthly achievements, we should gain nothing. "For what shall it profit a man (he prayed to God that this inquiry might sink deep into our hearts) if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

"'But again: He had not only forgotten the claims of the soul, but also the *claims of death*. "Soul, thou hast laid up for *many years*," had been his declaration. And what a declaration this for a being whose breath was in his nostrils! It was well to bear in mind that of all known uncertainties, *life* was the most uncertain. Wealth, by means of strong walls and iron chests, might be safely secured; reputation, by preserving a strict correctness in all our walks and actions, might be retained; but see! how is it with human life? Mark yonder railroad train flying along the iron way with lightning speed—there is a sudden crash! It was the work of an instant; and now we may pass around among the dead, the dying, and the wounded of that mass of living, happy beings but a moment before! Yes, even to-day the realization of a scene like this had been echoed through our streets, and his hearers had doubtless heard of it.

"'Die we must, be our circumstances whatever they may. We could not tell what would become of us, yet heaven or hell *must* be our destiny.

"'Death had come to the rich man in the text, and at the dead hour of night laid his skeleton hand upon him, and thundered into his ears, "This night thy soul shall be required!" Then probably the first prayer had been wrung from those ungrateful lips, as he implored the fell messenger to spare him but till morning, that he might take leave of his family, or that he might execute his will, or, above all, that he might have if it were but an hour to make his peace with God. But no! the decree of the avenger had gone forth, and was inexorable in its demands. Now was the time—now he must die!

"'Oh! how great had been the folly of this man—and yet there were

many of us quite as foolish as he: like fools we were living, and, like the arch infidel Voltaire, when we come to die it would be to "take a leap in the dark."

"'But *lastly:* He had not only forgotten the claims of God, of his soul, and of death, but he had forgotten the claims of judgment. The evidences of Scripture were most explicit that "what a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Another rule was, that in proportion as we had received it would be required of us in the end. And in view of this, he would ask of the soul that had never been washed in the laver of regeneration—that had never responded to the noble impulses of a god-like charity, but whose whole existence had been devoted to the circumscribed limits of self-aggrandizement —of what value was it all? for in the hour of death all would have to be given up. And then that awful future! where, instead of drinking of the pure, delightful waters that flow from beneath the Father's throne, the lost soul must drink the bitter cup of the Father's wrath, even to its dregs; and, instead of basking amid the melodies of heavenly anthems, must forever dwell amid the desponding echoes of the groans of the tormented.'

"The above sermon was an extemporaneous effort entirely, and elicited the most marked attention throughout its delivery."

The services of Mr. Cookman, at the dedication of Waugh Chapel, referred to in his diary, produced at Washington the impression which the advent of a "Cookman" was adapted to make in the national capital. A correspondent of one of our *Advocates* wrote of the occasion:

"I will allude to but one more point, and that is the dedication of Waugh Chapel last Sabbath. The services were extremely interesting. The sermons in the morning and afternoon were preached by the Revs. Alfred Cookman and John Emory Cookman, both sons of the late lamented George Cookman, who was lost on the ill-fated *President.* Both of these young men partake in a remarkable degree of the spirit and eloquence which characterized their father, especially as seen in his little volume of published speeches and sermons. The sermon in the morning was a beautiful exposition of the reasons why the apostle 'gloried in the Cross,' in which the youthful speaker held an overflowing audience, among whom were many members of

Congress and judges of the Supreme Court, in almost breathless attention for more than an hour. In the afternoon there was another great crowd to hear John Emory Cookman, who is, I learn, only nineteen years of age, and who has been a member of the Church but one year. Both of these young men are destined ere long, if their lives are spared, to rank among the most popular pulpit orators in our country."

Among the conversions with which God honored the ministry of Mr. Cookman during this period was that of his brother George, who, though next oldest to himself, had never before professed saving faith in Christ. On the first Sabbath evening of January, 1859, Mr. Cookman preached a most solemn and earnest sermon on the word "Now" to an immense congregation, and at its close invited penitents to the altar. He was feeling that night an especial solicitude for the conversion of his brother. The brother was seated in the rear of the choir (front) gallery, and, though the obstacles were apparently great, he deliberately arose, descended to the lower floor, and came forward to the altar and was converted. Nothing could exceed the joy of the pastor at this result, in which the brother who had been the companion of his boyhood was given to him in the fellowship of Jesus. The two became inseparable workers for the Master—George rivaling in the ranks of the laity the zeal and usefulness of Alfred in the ranks of the ministry. If Alfred's ministry at Green Street had done nothing more than to give to Methodism and to Christianity at large in Philadelphia, George Cookman, as an example of piety and earnest work, it would have been enough. His career was destined to be short, but full of good fruits, and such as only few young laymen in America have lived.

As evincing the manifold character of Mr. Cookman's ministry at this time, his adaptation to all classes, the attractiveness of his singularly pure and persuasive influence, there was a young Friend taken into the Church by him who has since filled

no small place in the public estimation. This thoughtful, ardent young woman found in Mr. Cookman's spirit and instructions what her nature needed. She came out from the Society of Friends, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. She showed a genuine piety, an inquiring temper, and promise of marked usefulness. What her precise relations to the Christian Church may be at present, I do not know; but there is not a loyal heart in all America that has not beaten responsively to the truthful, brave, and eloquent words which she afterward uttered in the nation's darkest trials. Her scathing rebukes of treason and her searching exposures of wrong, her animated, cheerful eulogies of liberty, heroism, and the flag, have roused to hatred of violence and to love of right even where the arguments of men had failed. I refer to Miss Annie E. Dickinson. The tribute which she has kindly written to the memory of him who was for so brief a time her pastor abundantly attests the depth of her attachment for him, and proves that her heart must be in sympathy with the great truths which it was his single joy to advance.

To the Rev. John E. Cookman:

"It is not an easy task you mark me. * * * Years have gone by since I sat down by your brother, looked into a face that warmed like the sun, and listened to a voice that called me away from all things poor and mean and earthly, as a strain of celestial music might call.

"Long years full of strife and care and toil—yet face and voice seem and sound as clear as though they shone and spoke but yesterday.

"A love of humanity wide as humanity, a charity inexhaustible, an earnestness that stirred the most careless, a hungering and thirsting after righteousness—not for its rewards—a tireless effort in season and out of season, with tender, yet powerful touch to mould and fashion others into the likeness of the Master; a longing so boundless to *be* like his Master, as to wear through flesh and blood full early, and carry the sanctified soul to know Him 'face to face.'

"This was Alfred Cookman.

"Sad hearts out of count has he left behind; eyes will grow dim and voices choked for years to come, when they think of or speak his name.

For he was one of those rare souls so exalted as to breathe the atmosphere of heaven, yet so gently human as to draw love and tenderness from whoso approached him.

"So his life seems to me, and, so seeming, I would that my pen were gifted with some of his subtle power to show it forth to others.

"As it is, I speak from my heart."

Only one letter of Mr. Cookman of this particular period has come into my possession. It was written on his birthday to his wife at her parental home in Columbia, and breathes the child-like, playful spirit, the earnest, constant zeal which so uniformly and beautifully blended in his daily life. I can imagine the air of conscious dignity with which the presents of the little brothers were accepted, as though they had conferred upon their papa a real benefaction.

To his wife, Mrs. Annie E. Cookman:

"PHILADELPHIA, Tuesday afternoon, January 4, 1859.

"Certainly you will expect me to act the correspondent on my *birthday*. Thirty-one years ago I struck Columbia in my descent to this sorrow-smitten planet. From that starting-point I have prosecuted an eventful and, in most respects, a delightful pilgrimage. To-day I erect my Ebenezer again, and gratefully acknowledge 'hitherto hath the Lord helped me.' Our meeting is progressing with considerable interest and success. Last night, despite the snow-storm, the body of the church was quite well filled. Brother E. J. Way preached an excellent sermon. Ten presented themselves for prayers, and four were happily converted. George is proceeding most prosperously in his Christian course; he says he is perfectly satisfied. Saidie tells us that last night he went to bed, joyously singing, 'I will believe, I now believe, that Jesus died for me.' Nothing, she estimates, could exceed his tenderness and kindness to her. He was always faithful and affectionate, but now, she states, there is an expression and exhibition of this feeling she has never seen before. It will inaugurate a new epoch in their domestic history. Saidie is resolved that George shall not go to heaven without her. Her mind, I think, is made up to walk with him in the narrow way. She talks about nothing else, and weeps almost constantly. Oh, that her night may soon end in joyous day! The children are both well. Just now they came into my study and placed on my table their porte-monnaies, saying, 'Papa, this is your birthday present from us.' Dear little fellows, they did it

of their own accord, and in perfect good faith. I put their present in my pocket, and thanked them very sincerely. They will not be separated. George asks a great many questions about his sister Annie; wants to know if she will live after the doctor cuts her with his lancet. When I speak of mamma's return, their little eyes dance with delight."

I close the Green Street pastorate with a brief testimony from J. F. Bird, M.D., a member of the charge:

"He got behind the 'Cross' on the occasion of his first sermon, and *there* remained until his term, which continued for two years, was ended. The young people crowded to hear him, and very many became *earnest* members of the Church through his instrumentality, and are now doing good service in 'every good word and work.' Among them was his brother George. At one of the most interesting services ever held in this or any other church, this dearly beloved brother presented himself at the altar, and very soon was happily converted. In writing to an absent friend, giving an account of this conversion, he said, 'I shout with my pen and with my soul over the auspicious event.' He had labored for it and prayed for it incessantly by night and by day, and therefore could not but 'shout' when his desire was realized.

"Mr. Cookman always regarded this appointment as one of the happiest, as it was one of the most successful, of his ministerial career. He labored for the *good* of the *people*. He lost sight of self. This was the secret of his success. An intelligent member of the Church was asked by a member of the Conference what was 'the secret of Cookman's success.' The answer was, 'His evident desire to do the people good.'"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE UNION CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.—SLAVERY AGITATION.—CHRISTIAN UNION.

THE next turn of the itinerant wheel did not take Mr. Cookman far. He was appointed by Bishop Scott to the Union Church on Fourth Street, in March, 1859. The Union charge is the next oldest to St. George's in the city, and is surrounded by business houses, which have from year to year pressed out the resident population to remoter sections. It is still a strong station; but at the time Mr. Cookman was sent to it, before other charges had been created, either wholly or partially from its membership, it was a powerful organization, including some of the most influential families of Methodism. Many of these families came from a distance, preferring to continue in connection with a Church with which they had been so long in close fellowship to joining those which were nearer their residences. The Union was consequently not so favorably located for a large congregation; but its proximity to the hotels and its free seats were advantageous conditions, and Mr. Cookman's popularity began immediately to produce an increased attendance upon the public services.

As indicative of the high estimate in which Mr. Cookman's ministry was held, I make a brief extract from a letter of Mr. Thomas L. Mason, a well-known member of Union Church. Writing to the Rev. John E. Cookman, he says:

"When Alfred was in Pittsburgh he promised me that, if the appointing power would agree to it, he would be pleased to be pastor of Union. When Conference met, Green Street (being heavily in debt) insisted upon having him, and to accommodate our Green Street friends we gave in, with the un-

derstanding that at the expiration of two years he would be sent to Union —and so he was. Our parsonage was in Eighth Street, above Race, but, to accommodate his little children, we removed it to 224 North Fifth Street, and partially refurnished it. He was received at Union with open arms and open hearts. Our congregations were good, our finances much improved. He was particularly successful with the young."

Mr. Cookman had the happiness of having many choice friends in the congregation. There were those under his ministry who had long held him in the highest personal esteem. His whole nature found scope for its gratification. Around genial hearth-stones his sanctified affections enjoyed agreeable companionship, while in the Church his hands were strengthened by judicious counsels and tender sympathies. The Rev. Andrew Longacre, laid aside by feeble health from the active work of the ministry, was a member of the congregation, and ministered, by his calm and gentle friendship, to his comfort and usefulness. His brother George, in the first flush of spiritual grace, with uncommon endowments of speech and song, was at his elbow. His own mother, also, was one of his flock. She who had so often fed him with the Word of life, must now be fed by him. But now, as before and since, she gave, if possible, more than she received. To lean on the support of a wisdom which, in his opinion, had become almost oracular, a faith which knew no abatement, a zeal which no waters could quench, was to him no slight privilege, a rich blessing in so arduous a position. There, too, was the sanctuary in the private house of Mr. J. B. Longacre, on Spring Garden Street, which the pastor could regard as very much his own, and to which, as to a quiet haven, he habitually resorted. The eldest daughter of Mr. Longacre, Mrs. John Keen, upon the decease of her devout mother, still maintained the meetings for "holiness" which her mother had founded. These meetings had been from their commencement a gathering-point for the friends of the higher Christian life in Philadelphia. Here Mr. Cookman's heart was

often refreshed; and issuing thence with deeper, calmer thoughts of God, he entered upon the recurring duties of his large and laborious pastorate with perceptibly increased vigor and success.

More than ever before, the earnest pastor, thus beloved at home, was in demand abroad. Whether announced in his own city or in any other place, on special occasions, he was sure to be greeted by a throng of people. His preaching at times was with overwhelming effect. The Rev. Mr. Longacre gives an account of the popular influence of a sermon preached about this time at Penn's Grove camp-meeting in New Jersey:

"I recall a sermon he preached at a camp-meeting in New Jersey, on the text 'Thy will be done.' The collection preceded the sermon, and it left the congregation a good deal unsettled. But at the first sound of his voice all was hushed into attention. As he preached and passed on into the appeal of his discourse, the whole vast throng was bowed in tears. People wept aloud, the preachers crowding the stand, and the passers-by on the edge of the circle. Near me was seated a traveling preacher of the Hicksite Friends. He had been restless at first, but gradually seemed subdued by the power of the preacher, until at the conclusion he stood up and cried with a loud voice, as if yielding to the constraining influence of the Spirit, 'We have heard the Gospel preached in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power.' We went to the tables right after the service, but for many minutes those at our table could not eat. We sat looking at each other, and weeping tears that could not be controlled."

During the autumn of 1859, Mr. Cookman was invited to Baltimore to preach at Monument Street Church. This was one of the churches comprised in the Baltimore City Station when his father was one of the pastors. His coming was a signal for an outpouring of his devoted friends and the public generally. He wrote to his wife:

"I seize a moment to drop you a line. These Baltimore friends are so incessant in their attentions and so abundant in their kindness that I have scarce opportunity to think of any thing but what is passing around me.

"Yesterday I preached to overflowing congregations. Although the North Baltimore friends had concluded *not* to advertise the service, fearing

an unmanageable crowd, yet both morning and evening *hundreds* went away who could not be accommodated with standing-room.

"I preached 'Power' in the morning, and the 'New Birth' at night; in the afternoon made three addresses; spent a sleepless night. To-day am hardly able to stagger about. This morning at ten we had a *most precious meeting* for an hour and a half. My soul is kept in perfect peace. Oh, the strong consolation there is in Christ. How delightful to labor when we realize the presence of the Master.

"Invitations for dinner and tea are more numerous than I can possibly accept. The friends vie with each other in their kind attentions. Look out for me on Wednesday. Love to all friends. Many kisses for the children. Tell them to be very good."

To his wife, Mrs. Annie E. Cookman:

"I am sure you will not object to receiving a few lines from a lonely husband. An exceedingly pleasant ride on the cars brought us to Philadelphia about five P.M. On my way to the parsonage I, of course, dropped in at the Race Street homestead. Mother and Mary were making their arrangements to sup with Mrs. W. W. Cookman. All were very well, and full of inquiries respecting yourself and the children.

"Arriving at the 'Fifth Street house,' I was welcomed by Lizzie P——, who had every thing very clean and comfortable. Taking up my letters and papers, I felt such a sense of loneliness as can not be described. I remembered this would not do, and as I bowed my knee in prayer sweetly realized that I was in the best of company. My compassionate Saviour came quickly to my relief, and the room was transformed into the audience-chamber of Deity. Oh, how unutterably sweet—how indescribably valuable is the religion of the Lord Jesus. My appreciation and enjoyment of its sacred influences are increasing day by day.

"My letters were from Rev. H. Slicer, inclosing an invitation and a free pass to the Shrewsbury camp-meeting; and another from the Rev. Mr. Thomas, urging me to serve him on the occasion of a church dedication. The former I will avail myself of; the latter I must decline."

The Shrewsbury camp-meeting was a favorite resort of Mr. Cookman. He loved to meet the Baltimore Methodists whenever he could, and nowhere were his labors more acceptable and useful than among them at their camp-meetings. He will be heard of again at Shrewsbury.

To his wife, Mrs. Annie E. Cookman:

"PHILADELPHIA, Saturday morning.

"Home again! In view of my general class, and for the sake of a good night's rest, I left the camp-ground* yesterday afternoon. It has been a memorable week. The recollection just now fills my soul with gratitude and joy. Our company was select and entirely congenial. Brother Y—— was sweeter than ever. It seems to me that, as he approaches his rest, he is becoming increasingly heavenly.

"Mother and Mary were with me in our little tent, which was arranged tastefully. No pains were spared in contributing to our comfort. The preaching was capital; the success unusual. I occupied the stand yesterday morning, and held forth the Word of life before an immense multitude. The meetings held at the Union tent were powerful and precious beyond all description. On Thursday morning we had a season which some of us will think and talk about when we stand on Canaan's happy shore. Oh, how often and how much I longed for my darling wife. The fullness for which you pant would, I think, have been realized amid those scenes. However, Christ is an omnipresent Saviour, and just as gracious at Columbia as at Penn's Grove. More particulars respecting the meeting I will furnish when we meet.

"I will try to be with you next week. My Sabbath work will oblige me, I fear, to return the latter part of the week, as I have arranged to exchange with N. Heston on the fourth Sabbath of August, and to be out of my pulpit two Sabbaths successively would hardly do. If, however, I return to the city, it will be to leave for Columbia the following Monday again, *en route* for Shrewsbury. I am very well *soul* and *body*. My heart is full of love, and my future full of light. God is with me, and proves himself a sufficient portion. I have three services to-morrow."

Mr. Cookman's pastoral term at Union, happy as it was in most of its aspects, was not wholly without trials. It covered a period which was one of great anxiety and perplexity both in the State and the Church. The "irrepressible conflict" between slavery and freedom was fast approaching a crisis. The elements of dissatisfaction and discord, which had been rising and gathering, had assumed such intensity as to forebode the most violent and destructive storm. The whole nation trem-

* Penn's Grove, New Jersey.

bled with uncontrollable agitation; every ecclesiastical organization, and more especially the Methodist Episcopal Church, was shaking to its centre with a controversy, the sharpness of which had precipitated the most equable men into bitter hostility. Hatred was fast taking the place of love; distrust of confidence; lifetime friends were becoming alienated; section was arraying itself against section; Northern opinion was divided; men stood side by side on 'Change, or sat side by side in the pew, or ate together, members of the same family, who differed almost wholly in their judgment of the causes and the cure of national and ecclesiastical troubles.

It was one of those times of decision in which Almighty God brings nations and individuals to the bar of judgment, and to which destiny holds them with an inexorable grasp. The wisest men stood bewildered in counsel; Conservatives were wringing their hands in despair or clinching their fists in fury; and even Radicals, while not doubting the correctness of their principles, were alarmed at the consequences which their success threatened to entail. "Conscience," exclaimed Mr. Hunter, of Virginia, in the United States Senate, "has done this. Sir, there is no hope of reconciliation or of the Union; the *conscience* of the North is against us." It was so; the enlightened conscience of the free states had reached a point when it could no longer tolerate the extension of slavery.

This conscience, however, was not yet prepared to demand its abolition in the slave states. Very few of the most pronounced anti-slavery men felt themselves to be a party to the wrong where it was protected by municipal law, and was beyond any possible constitutional process except by the concurrence of those who framed these municipal laws. Yet there were men in the Church whose conscience compelled them to exert themselves to abate slavery in the Church by requiring all slaveholding members to emancipate their slaves. They wished thus to leaven the State through the Church; to assist

in creating, by a clear testimony and by such ecclesiastic pressure as they could command, a public sentiment in favor of "abolition." There were differences of opinion as to the power of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to expel members for slaveholding, and also as to the expediency of exercising this power if it existed. The differences of opinion were not confined to any locality of the Church, though those who held an opinion adverse to such a power were massed mostly along the "Border Conferences," embracing the Baltimore, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, West Virginia, and Missouri Conferences, with contiguous Conferences lying north.

The whole question has since been consigned by the "logic of events" to a dead past, and is of interest chiefly as one of the teachings of history. No issues which have since transpired can throw the shadow of a suspicion on the honesty of the men who, in so great a debate, stood and acted apart. Time has healed—no, victory, in the happiest fruits of righteousness and peace, has healed the breaches of the angry strife. But it was an ordeal for many souls which can not soon be forgotten—a fiery trial—and though it only consumed the straw, that the gold might shine with the richer splendor, it was not the less painful in its endurance.

Mr. Cookman was among those who believed that a law should be enacted excluding slaveholders from the Church. When measures were introduced to effect this change, through what was deemed the proper constitutional process, he gave them his prompt and uniform support by voting for them. He stood almost alone in his Conference. There was a small knot of six or seven men out of about three hundred, and these were most of them men of advanced years. He was young, bright, popular, the idol of his brethren and of the people; his early education had been in the South; his principal friends were either slaveholders or their sympathizers; his opinions seemed to impugn the piety of people who nourished him in infancy and

youth; his vote seemed to fasten sin on those who were regarded as above reproach; the measure he supported must exclude many from the Church whom he hoped to meet in heaven, and even apparently blot with a stain the memory of many who had died in the faith. But Alfred Cookman felt that he must do his duty. He would not follow his principles to all their logical results; he could only see principles, and to them he must stand.

He did not question the piety and virtue of thousands hitherto and then involved in slaveholding; but of two evils he must accept the least. The opportunity had come for him to act, and it was for him to say whether he should spare the feelings of friends, or do what he could to liberate five millions of slaves; whether he should pander to a spirit of oppression, even though softened by religion, or strike a blow for universal freedom. He rose to the crisis of the hour. Cutting away from all social and personal entanglements, the man stood forth in an act of moral heroism seldom surpassed in the history of Methodism. When the resolutions initiating the change were pending before his Conference, he got down on his knees in the pew, and, bathed in tears, poured out his soul to God for light and strength, and arose and voted "*Aye!*" Here was the iron in his nature.

Let those who think Alfred Cookman was not a man of the truest and highest courage mark this. His forbearance for the weaknesses of men, his indisposition to insist upon points in which men differed with him, his great charity, which folded in its arms earnest souls and dropped out of sight their accidental disagreements, has been construed into a want of courage. Mr. Cookman never wasted his force on men of straw, but when real giants were to be crushed, he had the power to do it.

In keeping with the vote thus given was the sermon he preached in his own church about the same period, called by one his "*grand, grand* anti-slavery sermon," from *Isaiah* viii., 12, 13. As might be expected, some of his nearest friends and

principal supporters were wounded, and did not hesitate to express their displeasure. His only answer to all such was, "I can afford to forgive them." Under an oppressive sense of the responsibility which a declaration of his views would involve, he had made the sermon on his knees. He delivered it with the greatest fearlessness, and at the same time with an evident sincerity and tenderness, which convinced all who heard him that nothing short of the most thorough loyalty to the great Master animated his soul. At the close of the service his face shone with a spiritual light that showed how closely he had communed with the Holy Spirit, and how triumphantly the Spirit had vindicated him in the discharge of a most painful duty.

The session of the General Conference at Buffalo, New York, in May, 1860, was looked forward to with great anxiety by all the friends of the Church. It proved the most perilous since that of 1844. Mr. Cookman, in common with hundreds of ministers and laymen, felt he must see the body and witness its proceedings. Two letters afford a glimpse into his feelings.

To his wife:

"BUFFALO, Thursday evening.

"A long, long ride brought us to this western city about noon to-day. Although tedious and tiresome, still I greatly enjoyed it. Wonderful natural scenery, congenial company, with an unusual degree of divine communion, made it one of the most delightful journeys of my life. The details I must reserve until my return home. We are quartered at the *Western Hotel*, a neat, quiet, and comfortable house.

"After dinner and making our toilet, we concluded to take the half-past two o'clock train for Niagara Falls. Thither we proceeded, to find the dignitaries of the Church reveling amid those world-renowned scenes. I met with hosts of friends from the North and South, and East and West, who were really lavish in their expressions of pleasure at meeting me. Our company were perfectly charmed. My only regret—and sincerely it marred my happiness—was that my precious Annie could not unite in this extraordinary treat. My soul ought to have been filled with Niagara, but your absence would not permit this. At seven o'clock we returned to Buffalo.

"Great excitement obtains among all concerned in General Conference proceedings. To-morrow it is expected the great battle will commence.

The anti-slavery column stands strong and united. May God rule and overrule!"

To his wife:

"BUFFALO, May 23, 1860.

* * * "Sabbath was a glorious day. Bishop Ames in the morning, Bishop Simpson in the afternoon, and Dr. Porter at night; altogether a day of days. Monday it was gloomy and rainy. Yesterday we spent at Niagara. Oh, what a glorious visit it was! Part of the time I was with Mr. Guinness, which contributed not a little to the enjoyment of the day. Particulars must be reserved until we meet. To-day the slavery battle began. The excitement is intense. Coombe led off, followed by Moody and Norval Wilson. The Baltimoreans were here in large numbers. They are intensely excited. The general rule will not be changed, but there will be a secession on the border. I judge we are on perilous times, but the Lord reigneth. If I were not conscientious before God, the pressure of friends might move me from my position, but, while I would not grieve them, I must and will cling to truth and right. My spiritual enjoyment in Buffalo has been unusual. Love fills my heart; love for God and for all around. Oh, I feel during every succeeding hour that I am at peace with Heaven, and prepared, if it should be the Master's will, to quit these stormy scenes and rest with angels and the glorified."

We have before seen the fatherly interest Mr. Cookman manifested when his youngest brother was first meditating the ministry, now that this brother was fairly engaged in the direct and indirect duties which it brought, he could not do otherwise than afford him all possible counsel and sympathy. His brother John had only recently become a pastor at New Brunswick, New Jersey, and was to visit Philadelphia, to address the Young Men's Christian Association.

To the Rev. John E. Cookman:

"PHILADELPHIA, November 16, 1860.

"Perhaps you are ready to chide my delay in replying to your letter. The reason of my procrastination was that the information you desired had to be sought, and could not be had until after a meeting of the managers of the Young Men's Christian Association. That meeting was held on Wednesday evening, when it was resolved to postpone the anniversary until the evening of the 3d of December, when it will come off at Concert Hall.

Had it been held before, some one of the churches must have been the place selected. A very general and earnest wish was expressed that you might be one of the speakers. Dr. Tyng has declined. Mr. Crowell and Dr. Newton are spoken of as your colleagues. Respecting a theme, I scarcely know what to say. The relation of Christian young men to the times, or the responsibility and duties in the present crisis of our national and world's history, would, I think, be suitable.

"The value of a powerful illustration can scarcely be estimated. I say this as an offset to the claim you set up, '*Pay what thou owest.*' I could do this in a fortnight of sermons, and, retaining '*the figure,*' be decidedly the gainer. You know, however, that I love to act generously. No one is more interested for your success than myself. It is my triumph to see you triumph. '*Cookman*' is the name which, with the blessing of God, I desire to float aloft, commanding the respect, confidence, and affection of the world. Family pride (I trust it is sanctified) has a wonderful development in my experience. My beloved brother, never do any thing or say any thing that would lower that name one iota in public estimation. If we desire our name to remain unimpeached and be increasingly honored, then, struggling up above the infected atmosphere of this lower world, let us stand in the clear, broad, beautiful sunlight of God's immediate presence. Men will recognize us as Christ's; honor our principles; respect our character, and yield to our influence. John, take my advice, and be satisfied with nothing less than a heart constantly filled with God. It is a grand idea and a grander experience to be co-workers with God; infinite wisdom and illimitable power enlisted in our behalf. It helps us to think, to study, to pray, to preach, and to labor; it becomes the guarantee of inevitable and glorious success. I mean all I write, and hope that you will immediately put this matter to an experimental test.

"But to the illustration. I have been turning it over in my thoughts, and can not call up any thing that I think could be rendered more effective than Tennyson's 'Charge of the Light Brigade' at Balaklava. I inclose a copy, which you will please preserve, and return when you have done with it. Its application to this light brigade of young soldiers for Jesus, charging upon the flanked batteries of hell, would, I think, be very thrilling. *Forward the light brigade;* ring the changes just here.

"How are dear mother and Mary? We have many inquiries respecting their welfare. Will you not all come to spend the Christmas holidays in Philadelphia? I think you might excuse Mary *at once*, and allow her Philadelphia friends a chance. The festival at Sansom Street Hall passed off splendidly. Dr. Kennaday is preaching this week at Trinity. No special

interest is reported. The services are held in the lecture-room. The Tuesday-afternoon meeting is largely attended, and I think increasingly interesting. The children's class is getting on nicely under the auspices of M—— W——. She is vindicating the wisdom of our selection. Take good care of yourself, or rather commit yourself, body, soul, and all, to Christ, and let *Him* take care of you."

It could hardly be otherwise than that Mr. Cookman's reputation should attract attention in New York City. We accordingly find him invited thither on different occasions to speak at public meetings, and to represent the Philadelphia churches. In the autumn of 1860 he spoke at the anniversary of "Five Points' Mission," under the care of the ladies of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The anniversary was held at the Academy of Music. The audience was very large and enthusiastic. "His address," a gentleman recently said, "I can never forget. The three principal figures—the child and the Bible, the woman and her diamond ring, the sinking ship—are as vivid as if I had heard them only yesterday." A visit to New York, in company with Mr. George H. Stuart and other prominent Philadelphia gentlemen, to wait on a delegation of Irish Christians, was noticed by him in the following pleasant way to his wife:

"METROPOLITAN HOTEL, NEW YORK, Friday morning.

"How very gladly do I seize a moment this morning to add to your pleasure, for I am sure you will be delighted to hear from your *itinerant* husband. In company with Revs. Westbrook, Taylor, Wylie, and other gentlemen, I enjoyed exceedingly the journey from Philadelphia to New York. Mr. Taylor and I, seated side by side, engaged in a decidedly religious conversation which proved a very feast to my soul. Indeed, ever since my departure, my blessed Father has kept my mind in perfect peace. I very sweetly realize that He is around and within and all about me. Oh, the unutterable joy of uninterrupted communion with God! Mr. Stuart was at the hotel to give us one of his warm-hearted welcomes. After some ablutions, etc., we proceeded to the Cooper Institute. Owing to the storm, there was no crowd, but a very respectable attendance—certainly one thousand people. The exercises throughout were unusually spirited and interesting.

"The honored representatives of Ireland acquitted themselves very creditably. Your unworthy husband was called out. I said what was in my heart at the moment, and was kindly received. I feel it such a privilege to plead, under such circumstances, the promise, 'Lo, I am with you *alway*,' and find the presence of my Master on the platform as in the pulpit. About midnight we went to Mr. Stuart's room, and enjoyed together a season of prayer; after which, at peace with God and men, I placed my head on the pillow, and was soon lost in the oblivion of sweet sleep. This morning I am very well, and feel my heart overflowing with love to God. At noon I must be present in the Fulton Street prayer-meeting. My friends around are very polite and affectionate. How much I love, and how grateful I feel for Christian companions. How are my darling wife and precious children this morning? I need not tell you how dear you all are to me. Many kisses for the boys and little sister. Tell them that pa hopes they will be very obedient to ma, and very kind to each other."

This letter suggests a marked feature in the character and ministry of Mr. Cookman during these four years, which has not yet been as distinctly noticed as its importance and the full representation of his career require. I refer to his position as a representative man before the evangelical churches of Philadelphia. While there never was a more pronounced Methodist than he, I doubt if there ever was one freer from bigotry. He dwelt in a high serene atmosphere of love, whence he could look down and see all the bounds and fences of sectarianism dissolve in the unbroken sweep of Christian unity. He loved all Christ's followers, and was ready at all times to act with them in those undenominational movements which contemplate the glory of His kingdom in the salvation of men. The churches were not slow to perceive his mind and to feel the kindle of his spirit; and hence both for his piety and his talents he became by common consent the leading man of his Methodist brethren as a mover in those stirring days of revival to which allusion has already been made. He was closely identified with such men as the Rev. Messrs. Newton, Brainard, Taylor, Dudley Tyng, Reuben Jeffrey, and Mr. George H. Stuart, in promoting the general work of religion. A young man, he was in full

sympathy with the Young Men's Christian Association, as an institution providentially raised up to afford not only a beautiful expression of Christian union, but also a common ground for the most effective labors of all believers for the temporal and spiritual welfare of young men. He and other pastors were glad to labor under the leadership of the layman whose name is a synonym for pure philanthropy throughout our country. The work accomplished in those early days of the Association of Philadelphia can hardly be too highly estimated, and has only been paralleled by that of the Christian Commission during the late civil war.

Mr. Stuart has not ceased to value the services and to cherish the memory of his friend Mr. Cookman. He has kindly furnished to the Rev. John E. Cookman a brief estimate of his character and work as they impressed him at this time:

"I have been privileged to know many faithful and gifted servants of Christ, and to know them a second time in the perusal of their biographies —Dr. Murray, of Elizabeth; Drs. Edgar and Cooke, of Ireland; and Dr. Hamilton, of London, among them—but I can say that a more fervent and devoted minister of the Cross than *Alfred Cookman* I never knew. In him the old fire that burned in the hearts of Whitefield and Summerfield glowed with all the fervor of the first and Pentecostal days of Methodism; and no one could come within the sphere of his influence without feeling that he was one for whom to live was Christ, and to die was gain.

"Mr. Cookman's coming to this city was not long previous to the beginning of the great revival of 1857 and 1858. Through its precious scenes of awakening, of conversion, he labored with all the fervor of his nature and of grace. When I recall him in connection with that time of revival, his name seems voluntarily to associate itself with that of the eloquent and devoted young servant of Christ, the sorely lamented *Dudley Tyng*. Mr. Cookman preached several times with great unction and power in the Union Tabernacle, which was moved about the city during that time. A single sermon of his on the prophet's vision of the valley of dry bones was blessed to the conversion of several persons, one of whom heard him as she stood without the tent.

"Never shall I forget a 'noonday prayer-meeting' held during the revival, at which your brother presided. With deep feeling he asked for special

prayer for the only son of his father who remained still without an interest in the great salvation. You may judge with what fervor that request was responded to. A few days later word came that the prayer had been heard and answered, and that *George Cookman* was rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God. He too has gone to the upper sanctuary; but permit me to recall the fact that when, by age, I was called to lay down the office of President of our Young Men's Christian Association, its duties devolved upon this beloved brother, who was chosen as my successor. Very precious still to me is the memory of George Cookman, the second President of the Young Men's Christian Association.

"Alfred Cookman was one of those who represented to the mind of the Christian public the brotherly *unity* of the *whole* Church of Christ. His large-hearted catholicity, and his unqualified love for all who held by the Head, were what gave him his place among us. On any public occasion when the churches of Christ were called on to unite in utterance or in action, he was always expected, and never in vain.

"How faithful he was to all the interests committed to him inside his own denomination, you can testify of. I can say that he was one of those who made us feel that all these divisions were but regiments and brigades of the *one great army*, the hosts of the living God.

"My own personal relation to him was one of pleasure and of profit always. He was a brother in sympathy, a friend in help.

"When a sentence,* at which our Christian world has not ceased to wonder, cut me off from my place in the Reformed Presbyterian General Synod, he was among the first to give utterance to his Christian confidence and sympathy, in a letter which I highly prize as a memento of our Christian friendship."

Here also are words of the same import to Mr. John E. Cookman, from the distinguished and venerated Rev. Richard Newton, D.D., rector of the Church of the Epiphany, Philadelphia:

"No argument in support of the reality and truth of the religion of the Gospel is worth half so much as that which is furnished by the example of one so blameless, so consistent, so holy as was your loved and lamented brother.

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* Mr. Stuart was suspended by the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church for singing such hymns as "Rock of Ages," and communing with Christians like Alfred Cookman.

"I had not the pleasure of an intimate personal acquaintance with him. But during the years of his ministry in Philadelphia we often met together in various union services. On different platforms, where those who love the cause of Jesus take sweet fellowship together, we often stood side by side in striving to promote the honor of our Master's name and the welfare of His blood-bought Church. And now that he is gone, the recollection of those seasons is very dear and precious to me. His large-hearted love for the friends of Jesus; the singleness of his aims; the earnestness of his zeal; the fervency of his spirit; the untiring devotion, the unction and power that appeared in all he did and said, were the points about him that always most strikingly impressed those who came in contact with him. These were the broad seals upon his character that stamped him as one of God's own anointed ministers, and won for him a warm place in the hearts of all to whom the living image of Jesus is dearer than every thing else. I feel that it was a privilege to have known him here on earth, and I look forward with kindling hope to the higher privilege of meeting him in that bright world to which he has gone, and where the union of Christ's people, whom he so loved to cultivate here, will be perfected forever.

"May God graciously send down on all the ministers of Jesus still on earth a double portion of that sweet spirit of purity, humility, zeal, and charity, which shone so brightly and so beautifully in all the life and character of your lamented brother."

Mr. Cookman completed his term at Union Church in the spring of 1861. His pastorate here, though not marked by a general and continuous revival, was nevertheless eminently useful. Mr. Mason, before quoted from, says:

"His Saturday-afternoon meetings were a grand success. All the Sunday-school children loved him very much. We had constant accessions to the Church in small numbers. We held two protracted meetings in the body of the church. There was no great excitement, but many were converted and added to the Church, and some remain to this day. During one of these meetings a lady boarding at the *Union Hotel* said to some friends, 'Let's go over to the Methodist meeting and have some fun.' They occupied the fourth pew on the south middle aisle. *Before the fun commenced*, Alfred asked all that felt they were sinners to stand up, and, to the great amazement of her friends, Mrs. C. stood up. She was converted, was a useful member of Union Church many years, and removing to Camden, New Jersey, took a card and joined the Church there, where she lets her light shine still.

"Alfred's life, his character, and influence in the city was all for good. He was one of the purest ministers we ever had—the true minister in the market, the home, and in the house of God. One of his most effective sermons was preached on the steps of my house—to my son, Thomas T. Mason, Jr., who was just leaving for the army of the Cumberland. Taking him by the hand, he said, 'Tom, take God with you, and all will be well.' After the terrible battle of Stone River, in Tennessee, my son was taken down with typhoid fever, and just before he died he turned to his comrade, Thomas C. Moore, and said, 'Tom, I am taking God with me.'"

CHAPTER XIV.

REMOVAL TO NEW YORK.—MINISTRY AT THE CENTRAL CHURCH.—PATRIOTISM AND THE CIVIL WAR.

SUCH was the influence which Mr. Cookman had gained at Philadelphia, both in and out of the Methodist Church, that it would have seemed wise to retain him in that city. There came now a demand for his removal to New York. His fame as a preacher had become so wide-spread as to cause his services to be in request in many places, both for special occasions and for the pastorate. There is an ever-working law by which the grand centre of finance, trade, population, lays its claims to the intellectual and religious power of the whole country, and makes it tributary to its importance. The Methodist Church is no exception to the rule; and it could not be expected that Mr. Cookman would be an exception among ministers. The frequent changes of the itinerant system offer facilities of transfer from one city to another such as no other Church possesses. He had been four years in Philadelphia, and he must make a change—"Why not go to New York?" The application of the Central Church in New York was successful, and Mr. Cookman was accordingly transferred to the New York Conference in May, 1861, and stationed at that Church. The same society, which had originally worshiped on Vestry Street, had secured the services of the father, and he was to have entered upon his duties with them immediately upon his return from Europe; they were now equally fortunate to be able to command the son in their new and more commanding position on Seventh Avenue.

Some letters, written while he was in process of transfer and

settlement, are indicative of the mingled sense of responsibility and pleasure with which he contemplated the change.

To his wife:

"NEW YORK, Wednesday morning, May 8, 1861.

"I am just now in receipt of your affectionate and truly welcome letter. Your allusions to the precious children occasioned a feeling of homesickness. If I had only the 'wishing-cap,' oh, how soon I would sit down in the midst of my little family group! I trust, however, that I am in a providential path, for I try in all my ways to acknowledge God, and I think He is directing my steps. You ask how I like New York. My answer is—'Very much. Every thing here is alive and in motion.' The people are much more demonstrative than they are in Philadelphia. They feel, and do not hesitate to express or manifest their emotion. Yesterday afternoon John and I enjoyed a most charming ride in a carriage belonging to Brother S——. He kindly proffered it, and we drove about for two or three hours. It afforded us the opportunity of visiting a number of localities we have been anxious to see. I spent part of yesterday in the celebrated Dusseldorf gallery of paintings. I have never seen any that would compare with these.

"Last evening the stewards of Central called at Brother S.'s. They were very affectionate, expressed great pleasure in the prospect of my appointment, and an anxiety to have me settled at the earliest moment. They represent their parsonage as in very fine order, still they want to make some improvements. I will fill my pulpit (May 19th) Sabbath week, and after that turn my face toward Lancaster County, so that we may get here, say Friday of that week. I do not know how I can endure absence from my loved ones so long, but I live a day at a time, and try to keep the future out of my thoughts. This afternoon I proceed to Poughkeepsie, will remain there until Saturday, then return to New York, and, Providence permitting, preach to the soldiers in Union Square Sabbath afternoon at three o'clock. This is a very honorable and important appointment. You must not fail to pray for me. I had hoped to enjoy the meeting at Sister Lankford's yesterday, but was prevented from getting there."

To his wife:

"NEW YORK, Thursday, May, 1861.

"In view of some interesting anniversaries, I did not proceed to Poughkeepsie yesterday, as I originally proposed. This afternoon, however, the Lord willing, I shall turn my face toward the seat of the Conference. Nothing new has transpired in connection with my appointment. Yesterday I spent a half hour in the church itself. I was all alone—no, not alone, for

God was with me. Kneeling down, I asked my kind Heavenly Father to come with me to my new field of labor, and make the ensuing two years the best years of my life. The property is very tasteful and comfortable in all its arrangements and appliances. Last night I walked the streets of New York in company with Jesus. Do not be surprised. This was a precious realization, and my heart burned within me as I communed with my kind and sympathizing Redeemer. It was one of the evenings of my life. This morning I attend the anniversary of the American Bible Society. H. B. Ridgaway is one of the speakers. * * * How are you all this bright May morning? Oh, that I could look in upon your sweet familiar faces."

To his wife:

"NEWARK, N. J., May 14, 1861.

"You must not think for a moment that you are forgotten. Never were you dearer to my heart than now; indeed, I am sick to see my wife and children. The days drag their weary length along until I sit down in my domestic circle again. Last Thursday afternoon, in company with my friend Ridgaway, I started for Poughkeepsie, the seat of the New York Conference. The sail up the Hudson (seventy-five miles) was magnificent. The half had not been told me. It must be seen and enjoyed to be understood. Oh, how much I longed for your presence to make my joy complete! It will be a delightful trip for us some day during the approaching summer. Poughkeepsie is a beautiful city. My home was with a family by the name of Van K——, members of the Dutch Reformed Church. They live in elegant style, and did every thing possible to promote our comfort. On Friday morning I was introduced to the New York Conference, a body of nearly three hundred members, fine-looking and intelligent. They were very cordial—came forward and assured me of a most hearty welcome. John is on the spot, solicitous respecting his reception into the Conference, of which there is some little doubt. The doubt grows out of the fact that the Conference is already crowded with men, and, as at Philadelphia, they talk of postponing the reception of young men until next spring. Ridgaway preached on Friday night. * * *

"Saturday afternoon I returned to New York; preached at Eighteenth Street on Sabbath morning, and in Union Square at three o'clock P. M. Had large audiences and great freedom. In the evening I crossed the East River and worshiped in Henry Ward Beecher's Church. It was a great treat; a wonderful congregation, splendid singing, superior prayers, and a timely, pointed, practical, and popular sermon on camp-life. There is but one such man in this world. Instead of returning to Poughkeepsie yesterday I rambled about with Ridgaway, visiting the Book-room and office of

The Methodist, and gazing at the *Great Eastern*, which arrived on Saturday last. In the afternoon I accompanied him to Newark, and am spending a few hours at the palatial residence of my friend W——. It is only a stern sense of duty which detains me in this region, for, as I intimated before, I am restless to see my dearly beloved family. To-day I will write to James W—— to ship my goods. Probably they will reach New York by Saturday. I will have them stored at the parsonage; will preach on Sabbath, and, if at all possible, start for Columbia either Monday or Tuesday. I have met quite a number of the Seventh Avenue friends. They are extremely cordial, expressing the greatest pleasure in the prospect of my appointment. They strike me as a sincere, warm-hearted congregation, with whom I can labor pleasantly and profitably. The S.'s are very kind."

These letters recall very vividly to my mind the interview to which Mr. Cookman refers. I had been invited to make one of the addresses at the anniversary of the American Bible Society, and I remember that no one greeted me more cordially at the close of the exercises than our friend. We planned—as I wished to visit the New York Conference then in session at Poughkeepsie—to go up the Hudson by steam-boat the same afternoon. Neither of us had seen the famous river, and so we anticipated much. It was our good luck to have a charming afternoon, and also to meet on board the Rev. A. K. Sanford, a member of the Conference, whose familiarity with the route greatly heightened our pleasure. It was one of those delightful occasions when all the senses were open. The first buds of green were tinting the landscape, lending great freshness to scenes which otherwise would have been remarkable only for fidelity and boldness of outline. Mr. Cookman, with that keen perception of the beautiful for which he was so remarkable, seemed quite ravished with the ever-shifting views, which in their rapid succession kept alive a perpetual feeling of surprise and admiration. At the Conference he was, as a transferred man, the object of interest, and a desire was generally expressed to hear him preach; but, with instinctive modesty, he waived the request, and sent the committee for his unsuspecting companion.

Just so soon as Mr. Cookman got settled in his new home, which had been put in order for his family, he began to unfold those methods of usefulness in the observance of which he had been every where successful. He now found himself placed in a comparatively untried field. He was but one of hundreds of pastors of first-rate ability brought to the great centre from all parts of the country. The congregations of the Central Church were devout, refined, and intelligent, but not large and overflowing, such as he had been accustomed to. They thus lacked an important element of effective oratory in a popular preacher, and also the conditions so necessary to the extensive revivals which had so often attended his ministrations.

Mr. Cookman speedily adapted himself to the altered circumstances, went quietly to work, and, in the absence of all parade, addressed himself to the proper vocation of a faithful pastor. His diligence, zest, and wisdom soon began to be manifest in the growth of the congregation, in the deepening piety of the members, and in the general and harmonious advancement of all the institutions of the charge. The Sunday-school instantly felt his magical touch, and the young men came around him as if drawn by an irresistible spell; the whole people were warmed into an intenser glow by his benignant spirit.

The following letter to his wife, touching the prospective removal into the new home, will be appreciated by all Methodist ministers and their families. One must go and another come; the parsonage must be refitted for the incoming family. It is a hard time for sick children and invalid wives; but the wheels roll on, and around must go wives and children with the wheels. The Methodist Church is a militant Church, and not only the ministers, but their families, must be regarded as part of the army, and must feel it no hardship to be always ready at the appointed signal to break camp and march. The reference in this letter to the preacher's class suggests one of Mr. Cookman's strongest points. No man ever possessed greater facility

in the difficult and useful exercise of class-leading. The class of six soon grew to be a room full, and became a rallying ground in the work of the station.

To his wife:

"NEW YORK, Friday morning, May, 1861.

"I am in the midst of a vast population, and surrounded by many kind friends; nevertheless, I suffer a sense of isolation. My precious family are absent, and none can serve as their substitutes. Were it not for the presence of my blessed Saviour, which has been a delightful and continued realization, I could scarcely have borne the deprivation I have been suffering. My Heavenly Father has been specially gracious to me within the last week or two; accompanying me in my walks, visiting me in my night seasons, strengthening and blessing me in the society of friends, keeping my mind in perfect peace. Yesterday afternoon I entered on the duties of my pastorate by leading the preacher's class. It was very small, only six being present; among the rest my hostess, Mrs. Skidmore. I cast myself on Christ, and enjoyed the service very much. After the class, I visited in company with Mrs. S. the parsonage. Rev. Mr. Hare kindly conducted me through the house. It is a very comfortable establishment. I think you will like it quite as well as any of your former homes. A detailed description I will reserve until we meet. The former pastor, Brother Hare, will not get out till next Monday. Then the trustees will commence vigorously the work of repair and improvement. They will paper some of the rooms, and paint the house throughout. This can not be finished next week. Hence I propose to get my pulpit supplied for the following Sabbath (the 26th of May), and bring on my family the latter part of the next week. I am so thoroughly homesick that I can not readily consent to remain here another week. My goods will probably arrive to-morrow; but, as Brother Hare will not take up his bed and walk before next Monday, I may have to remain until Tuesday, that I may superintend the transfer of my boxes to our new home. In that case I will not see you before Tuesday evening or Wednesday next.

"John left this morning for Lennox, his appointment. He is in good spirits, and thinks he will be pleased. We shall hear more on his return next week. This evening is the occasion of our regular weekly prayer-meeting. I am looking forward to it with considerable interest. On Sabbath I expect to preach morning and evening. This is a prospective trial, but I shall look to and depend upon Him who has said, 'I will never leave thee—no! I will never forsake thee.' Pray for me. If I should complete my arrangements we will spend the following Sabbath together quietly in Columbia. This will be for me a great treat after the excitement of the last fortnight."

The first year of the pastorate at Central passed usefully and pleasantly, affording every indication that the new minister had taken a strong hold upon the affections of his people. It was the year of the outbreak of the rebellion; and, perhaps, one of the most trying periods for all the ordinary methods of ministerial work which the American Church has known. It was a time when the pruning-hook was beaten into the spear, and the plowshare into the sword. The war spirit had possessed the populations; the great masses had risen as one man for the vindication and safety of the Union; and from one end of the land to the other the strange noise of drum and fife called the young men to arms, and the highways and streets were thronged with troops marching southward for battle. New York was in a ferment of excitement—her streets were drill-grounds, her public squares barracks, her Sabbaths fallen under the stern exigency of preparation for instant conflict.

Amid such scenes it was no wonder if the congregations of the churches were decimated, and the spirit of religious revival repressed. After the first blaze of patriotic fire had spent itself, and the people had become used to matter-of-fact war—found themselves humbled with disappointment, and settled down to the hard tug of persistent efforts—there came a reaction in the religious feeling, and an increased attendance of the multitudes upon public worship. Through this season of discouragement Mr. Cookman, like other faithful ministers, stood his ground, worked how, where, and when he could. We have seen that even before his settlement in New York he preached to the soldiers at Union Square. It was a stirring sermon, full of patriotism, but, if possible, fuller of Christ. That service was but the first of many that followed—sermons and speeches which helped to keep alive in the country both faith in God and faith in the Republic.

In New York as in Philadelphia we hear of him at the Union prayer-meetings. He who had borne such an active part in

the one city could not remain idle in the other. At the anniversary of the Fulton Street prayer-meeting he was heard to utter these clear and ringing words:

"It may not be uninteresting or inappropriate for me to state that while I lived in the city of Philadelphia I had the honor to be the pastor of the Church which stands upon the site of the 'Old Academy,' as it was designated, the favorite preaching-place of the illustrious Whitefield.

"In the lecture-room of that Church was organized the first noonday prayer-meeting for the city of Philadelphia. It was commenced by a young man who had resided in the city of New York, and who had frequently availed himself of the privileges of this Fulton Street noonday service. After his removal to Philadelphia, he felt that a similar meeting would be profitable in his own experience and for the community at large, and was resolved to assume the responsibility of its establishment. It is but proper to say that, in the first instance, the effort was feeble and unpromising; and many times have I passed by the door of that lecture-room, and, glancing in when I ought to have gone in, observed three or four prostrate before God, importuning an outpouring of divine influence upon themselves and upon others. Those prayers, however, were effectual; they reached the ear, and they influenced the heart of an almighty Saviour; and before long the number attending the service in that lecture-room was very considerably increased. It was then resolved to remove to Jayne's Hall, of which doubtless you have all heard quite frequently; and after the removal to Jayne's Hall the interest so rapidly extended that before the lapse of a week four thousand persons might have been seen associated together for the purpose of public prayer.

"If these humble efforts were followed by such special results in that case, what may we not hope for after the patient and the persistent prayers that have been going up from this Fulton Street meeting, and from similar services, during a succession

of years? I have the impression that when these terrible providences which are associated with our present war shall have mellowed the great national heart, the results of these prayers will appear in a mighty and unprecedented Pentecostal baptism, when there shall not be four thousand or forty thousand only, but millions prostrate beneath the mighty power of God. And oh! in the prospect of such an outpouring, may we not to-day linger in the midst of our great country, desolated not only by civil but spiritual rebellion, covered all over with moral death, and may we not imitate the example of the prophet, as with the voice of one man, and pray, 'Come, come from the four winds, O breath! and breathe upon these souls that they may live?'

"As an encouragement to prayer for individuals, will you excuse me if I introduce a passage from personal experience? I was the eldest of six children, five sons and one daughter. The mysterious hand of God's providence buried my precious father while I was still young in yon broad, deep ocean. My widowed mother—for whom I will even in this public way praise the Father of the fatherless—was greatly concerned, of course, for the salvation of all her children. Her prayers, which were importunate and constant, were heard in heaven, and soon they began to be answered, as one after the other of her sons was brought into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Four years ago we were, as I trust, a united family in Christ, with one exception, and that exception was a beloved brother, a noble, affectionate young man, twenty-seven years of age. He had been my associate during life; we had played together as boys; we had slept in the same bed; we had attended the academy together; we had bowed at the same maternal knee, and had joined in repeating the petition, 'Our Father which art in heaven.'

"I can not tell this audience how I agonized for the salvation of that brother, and how anxious I was that we might be a united family in the Saviour in time, and then an undivided

household in paradise. Morning, noon, and night I brought this interest to a throne of heavenly grace; and one day I rose in the Philadelphia noon prayer-meeting and asked them to pray for that brother. Oh, how they prayed! I shall never forget their interest and earnestness, and if I am so happy as to reach the glory-land, I think I shall find out some of those Christians, and will thank them for their united and importunate prayers upon the occasion of that noonday service. Only a short time elapsed when that brother, who was unaware that united prayer had been offered in his behalf, was found prostrate penitently before God, and became a subject of regenerating grace. He joined the Church, and has subsequently come to be one of the most earnest, consistent young Christians I ever knew.

"Before I sit down, allow me to speak of a circumstance which transpired in the neighborhood of Boston. A few years since two gentlemen entered a car in that city *en route* for the interior, and, seated side by side, they very naturally fell into conversation, when it transpired that they were both traveling to the same place, and soon, to their mutual surprise, they discovered that they bore the same name. Then they ascertained that they were both going to see an elder brother, one whom they had not met for many, many years; and then the almost overpowering truth burst upon them that they were literal, natural brothers, who in the providence of God had met in this most extraordinary way. They had been separated from early childhood, and now, after the lapse of thirty long years, they had been most surprisingly brought together. As I have been sitting here and listening to allusions about heaven, I have said in my heart, 'That is my place of destination, and I hope, through grace, to stand triumphantly upon Caanan's shining shore.' And then, as you have used the term Christian, I have said inwardly, 'That is pre-eminently my name.' I am a Methodist Christian. I do not attach a very great deal of importance to the Methodist, but I would place very strong emphasis upon

the designation Christian. Just as my name is Alfred *Cookman.* I care not for the Alfred; I would just as soon it were George or Joseph or John, but I cling tenaciously to my family name. As you have made very touching and beautiful reference to Jesus, I can say he is my elder brother, and I hope after a while to be associated with him in heaven. It is a delightful truth that we are associated to-day, brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, hastening onward as rapidly as time can bear us,

"'To the house of our Father above,
The palace of angels and God.'"

It could not have been otherwise than that Mr. Cookman would early make the acquaintance of the famous Sing-Sing camp-ground. To a beautiful grove, lying back of the village, many of the Methodists of New York and vicinity had long been accustomed to resort for their annual religious festival. Before the days of railroads, by sailing-vessel and steam-boat, thither the city folks made their way, and the farmers drove in from the adjacent country, that on this time-honored spot they might worship God. Whether this zealous friend of camp-meetings reported himself the first year of his residence in New York does not appear, but the second year he was there, mingling amid its devotions, enjoying its Christian fellowship, and preaching with his usual power and acceptability. Mrs. Cookman had gone with the children to spend the hot weather at the family retreat, her father's home in Columbia, Pennsylvania.

To his wife:

"NEW YORK, Saturday, August 30, 1862.

"Home from camp-meeting, tired enough. Went to bed this morning at one o'clock; at two disturbed by singing in the adjoining tent; at five, or even before, dressed myself and prepared for the homeward march. We have had a glorious week. Oh! I can never, never forget it. The camp has been only outside of heaven itself. Weather favorable. Friends attentive and affectionate. Meetings powerful and blessed. Arriving on the ground in time for afternoon preaching, heard a sermon from a Brother Littlewood on 'Enduring hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ;' in the

evening, a Brother Bates on the 'Conversion of St. Paul.' On Wednesday morning Dr. True preached about Moses. In the afternoon an old veteran of the Troy Conference discoursed on the subject of 'Holiness;' in the evening Brother D. Buck on 'Mercy and righteousness have met together,' etc. Thursday, Dr. Wentworth preached in his usual effective camp-meeting style on 'Christ crucified;' in the afternoon Brother Newman on 'Holiness'—an excellent sermon. In the evening Rev. H. Cox, of St. Louis, occupied the time in presenting his cause and taking a collection. Friday, Brother Pegg preached in the morning on 'This treasure in earthen vessels;' in the afternoon Brother Fox, of Forty-third Street, on 'I have a baptism to be baptized with, and I am straitened until it is accomplished;' and in the evening your poor unworthy husband on 'Redeeming the time.'

"Oh, how much oppressed I felt in view of my fearful responsibility! But, glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, divine strength was made perfect in my great weakness, and I think that never have I preached so much in demonstration of the Spirit. Sinners were smitten on the right hand and on the left. The altar and tents were occupied with penitents and praying Christians; many souls were converted. One gentleman of forty years of age was awakened and converted while I preached. Not unto me, not unto me, but unto my blessed, blessed Saviour shall be all the praise and glory, now and forever more.

"My own soul has been greatly refreshed and strengthened through the rich privileges I have been enjoying. I trust that I am more powerful to do for Christ than I have been. Glory to the Lamb!

"Mrs. S—— and Mrs. D—— occupied the same tent. They had one of the sweetest camp-meeting homes you ever saw. They were more than kind to me. There was nothing I needed that they did not immediately and cheerfully provide for me. How strange that I, one of the least of God's servants, should be the recipient of so many Christian attentions and kindnesses. As Mrs. S—— suggested in the cars this morning, we shall have something to talk about all the autumn approaching. She is better, I think, in health; and in her experience is bright and happy beyond precedent. Would you believe it, she almost avows herself now an abolitionist. When prayer was offered for the emancipation of the slaves, she would ring out her hearty 'Amen!' Glory to God! So much for the power of holiness.

"Arriving home this morning, I found your sweet, wife-like letters, which, you may be sure, I seized upon and devoured immediately. How glad I am that the well ones continue as usual, and the sick ones are no worse. The tidings respecting Bruner are decidedly encouraging. May God have

you all in His care and keeping! I feel so much confidence in my Heavenly Father as to be persuaded that he will do exactly right."

The delight which Mr. Cookman found in his family is manifest in all his letters. Those who knew him most intimately will recall that he never seemed so perfectly happy as when in the bosom of his home. The letters which he wrote his children when absent on their summer vacations were full of sweetness. They did not lack good advice; but were rather characterized for parental tenderness and familiarity. He could be a child among his children. Up to this time there had been no alloy in his domestic bliss—the children, his wife, and himself had been favored with uninterrupted health; but now it pleased God to allow sickness to enter the circle. His eldest son and first-born, Bruner, was affected with a painful disease, which finally, after some years of suspense, terminated his life. A few letters of this date happily illustrate the feelings which animated his soul under the checkered dispensations of Providence. Happy in the sunshine, he was not despondent in the shade. The first touches of sorrow were borne with resignation, and served but to mellow his rapidly growing experience.

To his children:

"NEW YORK, June 21, 1862.

"This is Saturday night, when papa, you know, usually studies his sermons. Bruner is asleep, Will is asleep, little Beck Evans is asleep, mamma is getting ready for bed, and I am writing a letter to my dear George and precious Frank and sweet little sister Puss. Well, how have you been getting along this week? I hope you have been very good, making as little noise as possible; obeying all that aunt B—— or grandma has said, remembering your prayers every night and morning, asking your blessing, and behaving well at the table, and acting like little New York gentlemen. On Tuesday I watched you waving your hats and handkerchiefs and flags until I could see you no longer; then I sat down until I reached Lancaster. There I waited an hour, and took another train of cars, and got to Philadelphia in time for tea, stayed at uncle George's all night, and the next day started for New York.

"When I got home little Prince danced for joy, he was so glad to see me. Then I started for Nyack, where I found mamma and Brune and Will and little baby sister. They were almost as much delighted as Prince, and

asked me a hundred questions about George and Frank and sister. I told mamma you were magnificent boys; that Frank did not cry; that sister was growing to be a large and lovely girl. We talk about you every day, and want the weeks to go by right fast until we shall all sit down together in Columbia. Thursday afternoon we returned from Mr. T.'s. Yesterday mamma and Brune had a long, pleasant ride in Mr. R.'s carriage. Brune drove nearly all the way. To-day mamma and Brune and Will and Betty and the baby went with Mr. P—— to the Central Park, and heard the music. It was splendid!

"Now I must close my letter. On Monday we have our Sabbath-school excursion. Next week, perhaps, I will write and tell you all about it. Be very good boys. We send kisses. George must kiss Frank and sister for me; Frank must kiss George and sister for mamma; sister must kiss George and Frank for Brune. Do not forget. Good-night."

To his daughter Annie, when a young child:

"My dear, darling Little Puss,—This is *your* letter, written by your precious papa. Every day he thinks about you, and wants the time to come when he may take you in his arms again. If you were here to-night he would not be satisfied with one less than a dozen kisses. Your dear brother Bruner has been very sick. He often talks about his little pet sister in Columbia. You ought to see his dog. The dog's name is Prince—a happy little fellow that barks at Willie, and plays with Frank, and jumps up on George, and follows Brune wherever he goes. I know he would love you dearly; he could not help it. Every body loves my little darling Puss, but nobody better than her devoted papa. Be a very good girl; learn to jump rope; help grandma to water the flowers; mind every thing aunt B—— says to you; kiss Mozie and little Alfred for me; don't eat all the currants and gooseberries before I come, but keep ever so many for your dear papa. Would you not like me to send you a pretty picture-book? Keep a look-out, and some of these days Kate will find one in the post-office for Miss Annie Cookman. Won't that be nice? Now give me a good-bye kiss."

To his children:

"New York, June 24, 1862.

"My dear George and Frank and Little Sister,—We received George's letter this afternoon, and were glad to know that you are all well and enjoying yourselves. Be very good children, and in a few weeks you will see your dear mamma and Bruner and Willie and the baby. Did I not promise to tell you about the Sunday-school excursion? Well, yesterday

morning we rose early, got ready, and went down to the wharf, where we found a large number of the boys and girls, with their parents and teachers. At about eight o'clock we started, and sailed down the bay. It was a beautiful morning, the sun was shining brightly, the air was cool, the boat was large and comfortable. Bruney, Willie, baby, Betty, Julia, and mamma, with the little carriage, were all on board. Brune ate cakes and drank mineral water. About eleven o'clock we got to Biddle's Grove, on Staten Island. This was a beautiful place, with swings and tables and a great many nice things. We had an excellent dinner, some charming walks, a game of ball, and then we started for home, where we arrived in the evening about seven o'clock. It was one of the happiest days I ever spent. Now I have bad news to tell you. Little Prince is dead. He died to-day. Instead of getting better, as we hoped, he got worse, until he could not walk or stand, and then the poor little fellow died. Bruner sat down and took a good cry. Some persons think he was so pretty that he ought to be stuffed, like those animals you saw at Barnum's Museum. But this is not worth while. He will either be buried or thrown into the river. Your little brother Willie told me this afternoon he was going to take 'me da—da in the 'team-boat.' When he takes me, I reckon we will go to Columbia. Now remember to be very good; say no bad words; go with no bad boys; be kind to grandma and grandpa; obey all aunt B—— says, and do not get sick or hurt yourselves.

"Now I must give you a good-night kiss—one for George, one for Frank, and one for dear little sister Puss. Mamma says I must send ever so many for her, and Bruney for him, and Willie for him."

To his wife:

"HOME, Tuesday night, Seventh Avenue.

"I have just returned from meeting. The rain of course influenced our numbers, and yet I was gratified to see so many present. There were four at the altar. One or two of those who presented themselves as penitents last evening have since then experienced peace. With a *single* exception, we had every unconverted person in our congregation to-night forward for prayers. Personally, I have had a rather desolate day. When you are here it is home; when you are away it is a house. After bidding you good-bye, I returned through the fog to our noisy city, drew some funds, paid for my last barrel of potatoes, bought sister a locket, which I afterward filled with likenesses of '*Mamma* and *Papa*,' purchased Brune and Frank books, and returned home. The children were in the best of spirits, and delighted with their presents. After dinner a letter came from Columbia, acquainting us with the improving condition of mother. Had this letter reached the

parsonage before nine o'clock this morning, you would at least have been tempted to postpone your visit. About three o'clock the children had their anticipated party. I honored them with my presence. It was a gala time. After taking a glass of lemonade and enjoying a little chat, I went over to the Tuesday-afternoon meeting. It was not very large, but exeeedingly profitable. Returned home, and had tea and prayer with the children. Mary devotes herself to them; she is very successful in interesting and entertaining them. Papa is unusually tender and affectionate. All his sympathies seem drawn out for the little darlings, usually so dependent upon their mother. The fact is, I am almost entirely at their mercy just now. They can do with me almost as they please, sister especially."

To his wife:

"SEVENTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, Thursday eve, 1862.

"Another day is waning. With us it has been decidedly wintry. The ground is covered with snow, though the prospect now is that rain will soon dissolve this, leaving us a delightful condition of things in our streets. Nine faithful ones braved the storm, that they might enjoy together the afternoon meeting. It was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Your dear little pets have been behaving themselves beautifully all day. This morning they turned their attention to the art of photographing. The magic lantern was the camera, Bruner the operator, and every body about the house patrons. I, of course, had my likeness taken. It was not flattering. They are all pretty well. George complains of headache this morning, and of course was permitted to remain at home. This suited Frank perfectly. Sister is very affectionate and good. Will steadily increases in sweetness. If you could have seen him this afternoon after he was dressed, you would have covered his fat little cheeks with kisses. They are very, very dear children. I have returned from our evening meeting. Owing to the storm, which is very violent to-night, the number present was small. The service, however, was decidedly profitable. We have your telegram, but no letter as yet; perhaps to-morrow will bring this coveted treasure. We talk a great deal about you, and *think* more. Twelve years of married life have made you a part of myself, which must be near, or I feel bereft and incomplete. I think I love God more for the gift of my faithful and devoted wife. Next to His Son, the blessed Christ, this is my greatest mercy. This is such letter-writing as used to characterize our honey-moon—but is it not honey-moon still, only the moon has been steadily increasing in magnitude and glory. The children are most probably kissing you in their dreams. Give Becky Evans (the babe) an extra kiss."