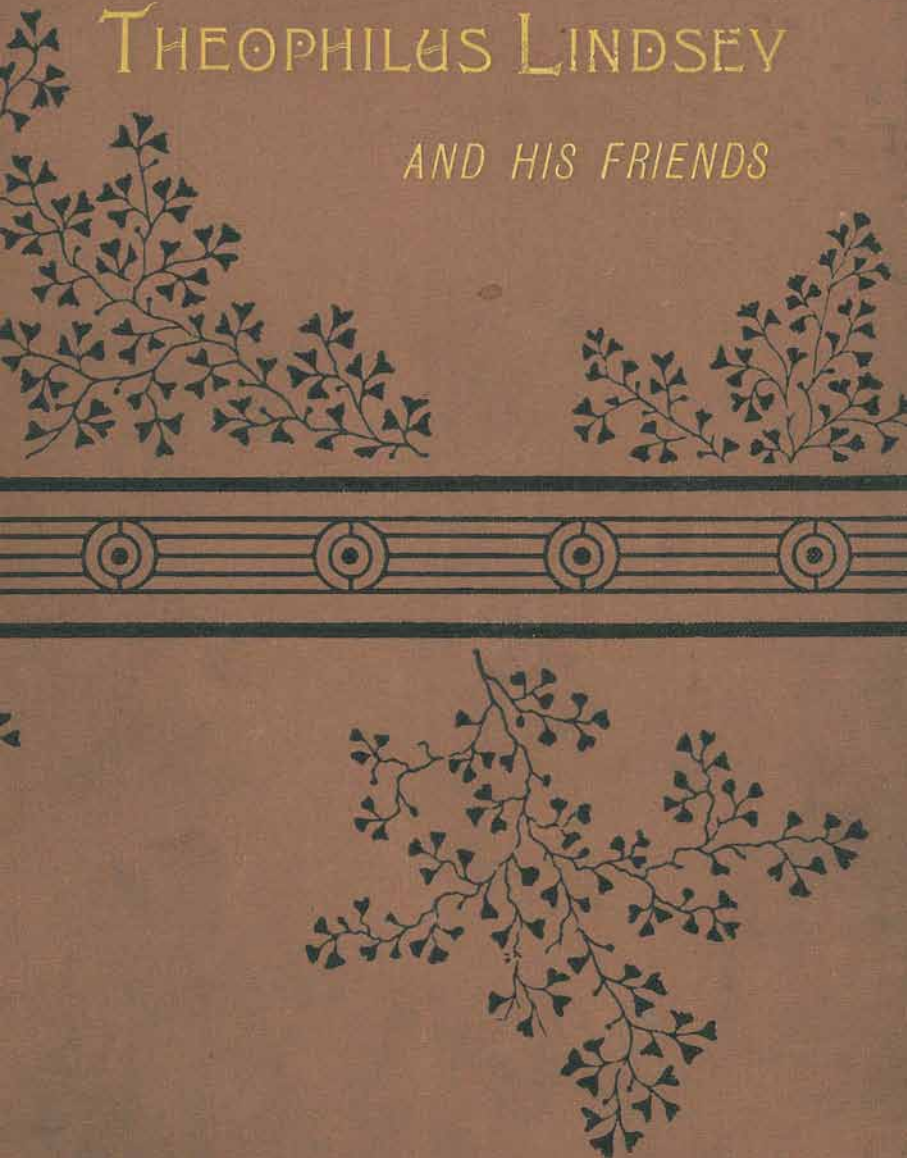
The Story of
THEOPHILUS LINDSEY
AND HIS FRIENDS



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THE STORY

OF

THEOPHILUS LINDSEY

AND HIS FRIENDS,

BY

FRANCES E. COOKE

AUTHOR OF 'STORY OF THEODORE PARKER,' 'STORY OF DR. CHANNING,' 'AN ENGLISH HERO,' ETC.

"He fought his doubts and gather'd strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them; thus he came at length
To find a stronger faith his own;
And Power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light
And dwells not in the light alone."—
TENNYSON.

London:
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION,
ESSEX HALL, ESSEX STREET, STRAND, W.C.
1890.

PRINTED BY ELSOM AND CO.,
MARKET-PLACE, HULL.

PREFACE.

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THE stories of Theophilus Lindsey and his friend Dr. Priestley, which are combined in this little volume, are almost unknown to young people of the present day. Yet, because of their faithfulness to duty and fearless search after truth, these men should be lasting examples for all time and should appeal to the reverence even of those who differ from them in opinion.

With this idea in view, I have tried to draw a bright attractive picture from the old biographies, but I have not made it my aim so much to give any minute description of the scientific discoveries we owe to Dr. Priestley, or of the theological controversies in which both were engaged, as to pourtray the deeply religious spirit of their lives, and their simple creed based on faith in God and love of their fellow-men.

F. E. C.

Oct., 1890.

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THE STORY

OF

Theophilus Lindsey and his Friends.

CHAPTER I.

YORKSHIRE NEIGHBOURS.

IN the year 1689, after the Revolution had brought William of Orange to our English throne, a memorable Act was passed by the Houses of Parliament and received the royal assent. This was the 'Act of Toleration,' which provided that no man should any longer be prosecuted on account of his religious worship, if he would take the oath of allegiance to the king, renounce all fellowship with the Roman Catholic Church, and hold firmly the

doctrine of the Trinity. May 24th, the day when this new law came into operation, was a great day in England. Dissenters, or Nonconformists, as people were called who dissented from or did not conform to the Established Church, felt that at last they might, as it were, draw a long breath, and hope to live in peace and safety. Many troubled years lay behind them. From 1662, when the 'Act of Uniformity,' requiring unfeigned assent and consent to all contained in the prayer book, had driven over two thousand conscientious clergymen out of the Established Church, one persecuting Act after another had been passed. It had been held a crime for any large body of worshippers to attend any other service than that which was held in a parish church, and all who did so had been obliged to meet in secret. So the Nonconformist had never to be forgotten memories of Sundays spent in fear and trembling, when little bands of people gathered together for prayer and praise in lonely farm houses in the country, or in unsuspected hiding places in the town; when none knew whether constables and soldiers might not at any moment break in upon the meeting, and hurry

away to prison all those who could not pay the fine inflicted by the law.

No wonder life seemed to have a happier aspect to these persecuted people when the Toleration Act was passed. For the most part, they were quite willing to serve the new King William the Third faithfully, they had no doubts about the required doctrine of the Trinity, and they distrusted the Pope and all his followers. By degrees, they ventured to build chapels of their own, erecting them at first in back streets or obscure parts of towns, for they were still subject to outbursts of the old persecuting spirit, and they still feared that the old evil days might return in full force. Numbers of these old buildings are still standing in England, and the sight of them recalls the memory of the time when men and women who dared to think for themselves in religion, began to hope that they might worship God safely as their consciences approved.

From that time it came to pass that the various bodies of dissenters,—Baptists, Independents, Presbyterians, &c.,—entered on a period of peace, and lived side by side with Churchmen, meeting no longer with the perse-

cution which had once called forth their faithfulness and courage. And it is said that a slumber fell upon the religious life of England. Men began to put their energies into trade and manufactures; material prosperity grew apace, and there was a lull in the disputes among the churches.

Such was the aspect of affairs when early in the 18th century, a Scotchman, named Robert Lindsey, was living at Middlewich, in Cheshire, and struggling hard against many reverses to make a living in the town as a mercer. He had shares in some of the great salt works of the place, and at one time had been a prosperous man. But times had changed, and through the imprudence of other people he had lost much money. Like many another Scotchman, he is said to have been keen and cautious, and, as his business troubles increased, he was glad to remember that his wife was connected with a noble and wealthy family, and that her titled relatives,—the Earl and Countess of Huntingdon, with whom she had spent her maiden life, —had lost none of their old affection for her since she left their sheltering care for married life in a very different sphere. And Mrs.

Lindsey, too, had kept bright the memory of all the kindnesses she had received, and when her youngest boy was born, on June 20th, 1723, she called him Theophilus, after the Earl's eldest son. As the child grew older, she told him many tales of those old friends, so that he learned to love his mother's kindred, and to feel a sort of pride in the noble name he bore.

In course of time, those high-born kinsmen sent the boy to school, first at Middlewich, then to the grammar school at Leeds. He spent his holidays at the great houses of his mother's relatives, and it was generally understood that young Theophilus Lindsey might depend on their help and encouragement in his future life. Perhaps some of his wiser friends were afraid that such prospects might lead to a lack of energy, and watched anxiously to see whether the boy, trusting to the help that was held out to him, seemed inclined to let his talents lie idle, and to waste his time. Happily, at the Leeds school, he gained a love of learning for its own sake; and a longing dawned upon him to make his life a worthy one for better reasons than because he would not sully a good old name. So, when his schooldays were over, and

he entered St. John's College, Cambridge, as a student, his new comrades found him as courteous and well-bred as any among their number, and there were few among them so firm to principle and so resolute in making a stand against the evil habits and unrighteous ways that had crept into the life of the university in those days. More out of respect than mockery, the idle, graceless youths of his college called him 'the old man,' because he held himself so far aloof from their company and pastimes; but hard-working, high-minded students found him a good companion in their leisure hours. It was well-known that he deserved the high honours he gained at the close of his college course, and there were many prophecies made of the renown he would obtain if he gave himself up to a life of learning and research.

Such a course was open to him, and it had its temptations. The learned leisure of a fellowship at Cambridge was pressed upon him by the professors who knew his powers. On the other hand, his noble relatives and patrons, who had good livings in their gift, were eager that he should enter the Church. For many an

hour young Lindsey paced the college garden to ponder this question of his future work in life. The rooks cawed in the old buildings above his head, and the waving branches of the leafy trees flecked with shadows the sunshine at his feet, and in those peaceful scenes, where so many men before him had puzzled over the same problem, he chose his calling. 'How can I best serve God and be useful to men?' was the question he asked himself. In answer he resolved to fall in with the wish of his patrons, because he believed that as a clergyman in the Church of England he could do the most good in the world.

There was no lack of valuable offers made to him. More than one rich man had a living waiting his acceptance, or an honourable post in the Church to bestow. Truly the lines might be said to have fallen in pleasant places for Theophilus Lindsey, and a fair future seemed to lie before his opening manhood. Conscience did not trouble him as he signed the Articles and declared his assent to all contained in them. The prayer book had been his daily food for long, and the doctrine of the Trinity he accepted as a matter of course. None of

his studies had led him to question the creed of his forefathers. So all was smooth sailing. He was ordained, and presented to a chapel in London where a rich and prosperous congregation gathered every Sunday, and his work as a clergyman began. Not long after, he became private chaplain to the Duke of Somerset. Then he travelled abroad with the Duke's grandson for a couple of years, and on his return the Duke of Northumberland gave him the living of Kirkby Whiske, in Yorkshire, and he entered on a quiet country life with plain-spoken, hard-working men and women for his flock and daily companions. This was a great change. He had been so long the favoured associate of nobles, with all the aims and interests of cultured life open to him. Yet he found the change a welcome one, and for the first time saw the chance of leading the worthy, useful life he had longed for.

By and by a new interest arose for him. Archdeacon Blackburne, well known in those days as an earnest and thoughtful Churchman, was living at Richmond, some miles from Kirkby Whiske. The Archdeacon soon discovered that his new neighbour was a man

after his own heart, and made him welcome. Many a pleasant ride did Theophilus Lindsey take along the moorland road and by the banks of the winding river Swale, to talk with the Archdeacon in his library, or spend a few happy hours with the young people and their mother in the beautiful garden which lay round the Archdeacon's house. The young Rector of Kirkby grew fond of his new surroundings, and would have been glad to know that his life would be passed among his Yorkshire friends, but this was not to be his lot. In three years' time his mother's relatives, the Huntingdons, to whom he owed so much, besought him to remove to the large, neglected parish of Piddletown, in Dorsetshire, where there was a rich living in the gift of the family. Their claim upon him was so strong that he could not refuse their request. In 1756, he said good-bye with sorrow to the worthy northern farmers who had received him so warmly; but he carried with him to his southern destination a hope that had gradually grown up within him in his visits to the pleasant Richmond household, that some day Hannah Elsworth, the Archdeacon's step-daughter, who seemed to

him to make sunshine wherever she went, would come to him and brighten his lonely home.

While this bond of union was growing up between Richmond and Kirkby Whiske, there were dwellers not far away in the same county of Yorkshire so isolated that communication with the world that lay below the rocky heights on which their homes were placed, was a matter of rare occurrence. Such a district was to be found in the west of Yorkshire, high up among the hills of Craven, where quaint, old-fashioned people lived, each man in the midst of unenclosed lands that had been in possession of his ancestors for centuries past. Old customs and sayings had descended with the lands, and ancient disputes also, and among these proud, self-willed 'Statesmen' as they called themselves, there was little knowledge and much strife.

Almost the only educated man among the dwellers at Long Preston was the Vicar, the Rev. Jeremiah Harrison, who had taken up his abode in the Vicarage House some years before. It was an old dwelling to which new rooms had been added, a grey stone house with a little lawn in front divided by palings from a meadow,

at the bottom of which ran a merry brook. Beyond this, the land sloped gently upwards till it was bounded by the great Pendle Hill, which stood like a mighty guardian of the place, and from the Vicarage windows could be seen the changing lights and shadows made by the flying clouds across its slopes. The Vicar's children, Catherine and her brother, found famous play-places in their father's garden and glebe land. In summer the flowers and living creatures of the fields were their companions. All the country sounds were dear to them, the cuckoos and the croaking bitterns, the rippling brook, and tinkling bells of the pack-horses as they passed along the shady lane beside the Vicarage garden on their way to and from the deep valleys below. Catherine was a pet among the wives of the 'Statesmen' who lived in her father's parish, and thus the first happy years of her childhood passed away. In this secluded life parents and children dwelt in peace, and if there were no excitements and changes in their lot it had also few cares.

But before Catherine was five years old, her mother's relations besought the Vicar to leave Long Preston. Some of them were people of

rank and wealth, and they were possessed by the notion that a member of their family should fill a more important place in the world than was to be found in a lonely village among the hills. At last, Mr. Harrison fell in with their wishes, though he felt much regret at leaving his country home, and he and his family removed to Catterick where a living was presented to him not five miles away from Richmond, where Archdeacon Blackburne lived.

At Catterick, a new life opened before the Vicar and his family. Mr. and Mrs. Harrison went 'into society,' they were sought by the well-to-do people of the neighbourhood. Catherine and her brother heard much about their mother's wealthy relatives and were taught to form great expectations from their help and interest in the future. The innocent country pleasures which had helped to keep a child-like heart within the girl were at an end. She was flattered by new acquaintances and began to long for notice and admiration. To make matters worse her father had an old-fashioned prejudice against the education of girls; and Catherine's little mind, in absence of better nourishment, was fed by all kinds of foolish

influences. For a short time she was sent to school; but while there, though she became skilful in embroidery and needlework, the needful training of her intellect was neglected. She paid visits, and when at home led an idle life, her thoughts bent only on excitements and pleasures, never even dreaming of the interests and ways of usefulness which were open to her, if she sought for them.

The best influence in her life came to her from Archdeacon Blackburne's family. Sometimes she was invited to spend a few days at Richmond, and the Archdeacon's children, always busy and happy as the day was long, were very kind to the lonely child. But Catherine cared for the Archdeacon's step-daughter Hannah Elsworth more than for any one else in the household. It was true that she was grown up and never joined in the games which went on among the children: but her gentle, kindly ways attracted Catherine to her; and when in course of time, she married Mr. Lindsey and went away to her new home in Dorsetshire, the chief attraction for Catherine had gone from the Archdeacon's house.

CHAPTER II.

QUESTIONINGS.

BETWEEN the ranges of hills which lie in the North and South of Dorsetshire there stretched a hundred years ago a wide district partly pasture land, partly overgrown with heather. The plain was varied by hills and dales and patches of forest trees. Its picturesque villages and growing towns were connected by old Roman roads and wild country lanes, strange mingling of the life of past and present times. In moorland surroundings lay Piddletown when Theophilus Lindsey took up his abode there, a country parish, where the last Vicar had been content to leave his people to their own devices while he played billiards or bowls with the neighbouring squires. Not so this new parson. He soon learned about the joys and sorrows of his flock, and was gladly welcomed in all the country homes of his scattered parish.

It would not be easy to say how much young Lindsey missed his intercourse with Archdeacon Blackburne after he left Kirkby Whiske. There was little congenial society about his new home in Dorsetshire, and he sought in books the companionship he could not find in men. The generality of people thought little in those days about the creeds their fathers had held so dear and took for granted the truth of the beliefs they had inherited. As has been already said, a slumber had fallen on the religious life of England. Mr. Lindsey found, however, that his parish work left him leisure for study, and in his quiet parsonage, with its fair view over the wide common whence the soft winds brought scents of heather and sounds of birds and bees, he was in the mood for reading certain books which, though written by thoughtful men many years before, had not yet gained the attention they were destined to receive. These writers were afterwards known by the name of 'Free-thinkers.' They were among the first Englishmen who thought and wrote freely on religious subjects. Their 'freethinking' arose from a reverent wish to see Christianity as Christ taught it, to clear away from the

doctrines held by men in their own times all the corruptions and additions which had gathered in course of ages round the words of Christ.

Probably Theophilus Lindsey read these books and pondered over them as he read. By and by he began to see a new meaning in the old Bible words that had been so familiar to him from his boyhood.

Meanwhile, he married the daughter of his old friend the Archdeacon, and she brought such sunshine into his once lonely home that it seemed as if no cloud could ever fall upon their happiness. Only one wish remained ungratified. Both husband and wife hoped that some day they might go back to Yorkshire to the scenes where they had first met, and the neighbourhood of their old friends. Now came a new offer from the Duke of Northumberland to Mr. Lindsey; fresh honours in the Church of England, were in store for him if he would agree to this new proposal made by the Duke. But no effort was needed to decide upon the reply to be sent. Theophilus Lindsey wished to remain the hard working Vicar of an English Parish, all he wanted was

opportunity to help and teach his fellow-men, and he and his wife, who was a true helpmate to him, worked among their people, and gradually fresh light dawned on his mind from the companionship of his books.

One day, he was reading the Bible with the wish that was always present with him now to get to the original meaning of the words he read, when his eye fell upon the text, 'To us there is one God the Father.' There was nothing new in it. He had read it a thousand times before: but suddenly there flashed into his mind the doubt whether the doctrine of the Trinity which he had been holding all his life, which the Church Articles taught and the law of the land enforced, could be made to harmonize with those plain words written by St. Paul in the early Christian days.

It came like a thunderbolt, this startling question, into the peaceful channel of his thoughts. Hitherto, he had taken all for granted, now he began to search through the Bible for more light on the subject, and the more he read the more sure did he become that men ought to worship the one God, their Father in Heaven; and that the doctrine of

the Trinity had never been taught by Christ and his Apostles.

What was he to do? Through sleepless nights and anxious days he asked himself this question. Must he give up the chosen work of his life and leave the church because he could not any longer believe all the ancient articles and creeds that had been framed in her church councils during the long lapse of years? Perhaps, he thought, these new difficulties of mine may disperse in time, or I may find a solution to them. He consulted the Archdeacon and other wise and earnest Churchmen, and found that similar scruples to his own were not unknown to them. But they comforted themselves with the thought that they had had nothing to do with the formation of these doubtful creeds, that there was no perfection to be found in any system in the world. These men (far better and wiser than himself as he believed) interpreted the old words with a new meaning of their own; and, while they tried to do their duty where God had placed them, they lived in hope of better days to come, when a change should gradually be made in those doctrines which they had outgrown.

While Theophilus Lindsey was still doubtful about the course he should take, ready for any sacrifice at any moment if he could only see what was right, news came to him from Yorkshire which seemed to throw some light upon his hesitation. The Rev. Jeremiah Harrison, Vicar of Catterick, was dead, and the large parish of poor and ignorant souls was without a teacher and guide. Mr. Lindsey had refused promotion, no wish for honour or personal gain ever moved him, and when he heard of this new field for work, with its poor stipend, but great chances of doing good, his whole heart went out towards it. There would be much more parish work there than at Piddletown, his time would be fully occupied in teaching and helping the poor people of Catterick. Perhaps, he said to himself, 'as I go on to do God's will I shall learn to understand the doctrines that puzzle me now.' So he asked leave to exchange his rich living and beautiful home in Dorsetshire for the much poorer benefice of Catterick, and neither he nor his wife felt any regret for the step they were about to take.

It was in the month of November, 1763, when they made their journey northwards. As they

neared their destination the autumn leaves rustled beneath the horses' feet, and the bleak winds whistled round them, telling them that they were coming into wintry regions out of their balmy southern home. While still at some distance from Catterick they came in sight of the ancient steeple of the parish church, which was built upon a hill. A venerable old building, famous through that part of the country for the old memories that clustered round it. It had been built 1100 years, and history told the rise of the Catterick Church, how in the far-away past a missionary from Rome had gathered the heathen people together out of the little Roman-founded town and had baptised them in the river which flowed through the neighbouring meadows; thus founding an early Christian church. But so large was the parish in this 18th century that smaller chapels had been built in outlying places, connected with the mother church and under the Vicar's care. Round about the hill on which stood the old building, with the vicarage by its side, lay the poor homes of the people of Catterick, who were perhaps, some of them, needing spiritual help no less than than did the pagan tribes

whom Paulinus had baptised so many centuries before. For Catterick was a great thoroughfare, and, at a certain season of the year, the resort of fox-hunting squires, who, with their grooms, frequented the inn, and by their evil example did much injury to the morals of the towns-people.

Before the vicarage lay a lawn with flower-beds, at the back of the house stood out-buildings, and at the side a shrubbery, through which a winding path led to the churchyard gate; and round the churchyard and vicarage garden ran a wall separating them from the road, on the other side of which a great part of the parish of Catterick extended. The Vicar and his wife formed for themselves rules for a very simple mode of life. They could not afford, as the Rev. Jeremiah Harrison had done, to visit and entertain the wealthy people who lived in the neighbourhood of Catterick, for their plans for the parish welfare would require all the money they could save. There was a reading room to be established, and a library for the use of the working men, schools for the children, books, clothing and medicines, and countless other requirements, for which all that could be saved from the Vicar's stipend was little enough. It

was a life of great self-denial that Theophilus Lindsey laid out for himself. By nature he was a kindly, social man, and it was somewhat painful to him to have to decline the advances of his neighbours. At Piddletown he had enjoyed much leisure for study, now he resolved to give up time, money, and talents, in the constant effort to make straight the rough ways of Catterick, and bring Christianity into the homes of its people.

All sorts and conditions of men marvelled how their new Vicar found time to enter into the cares and interests of the poor hard-working dwellers in his new parish. He tried to show them how the commonest work might be made high and noble if the right spirit were put into it, and that in their daily occupations they might all the time be serving great ends. In the church he preached to them no hard, abstruse doctrines, but held up to them high aims to guide their lives, and for his simple religious teaching went back to the words of Christ himself. Above all, he laid stress on his newly-found belief in the unity of God, and lost no opportunity of telling his hearers that the Heavenly Father, whom Christ taught men

about, was the one God and Father men should love and worship to-day. In this way the Vicar put aside for a time the doubts he could not solve, and hoped that while trying to *do* the will of God he might learn what was true and what was false in doctrine. When obliged on Sundays to repeat phrases in the church service which now had no true meaning to him, he consoled himself with the belief that by his pulpit teaching he was constantly preparing the way for a change to more wisely chosen forms of words. In course of time he saw that outspoken sincerity in speech and act, perfect truthfulness before God and man, were first of all to be maintained; but that time had not yet come, and he had to grope his way step by step to the light he longed to reach.

Meanwhile, Catherine Harrison, the daughter of the late Vicar of Catterick, had been passing through many sad experiences. Her father had left little property for the support of his widow and children, and Mrs. Harrison, on his death, took a small house in Bedale, seven miles away from Catterick, and settled there with Catherine; her son being still at Oxford studying for the church. At Bedale,

Catherine led a dull, unhappy life, regretting lost pleasures, and dreaming over joys and excitements which were now out of reach. After a time, to her great joy, an invitation came to her to visit her mother's relatives, on whose help she had always been taught to place so much dependence. Filled with great expectations, she set forth on her journey to Nostel, a country seat in Yorkshire, where her host and hostess lived, and where her brother was to meet her. 'Surely, if happiness is to be found, it may be expected here,' thought Catherine; but week after week of her visit passed away, and her dreams faded one by one. She not only saw that no help was to be expected from her relatives' position and wealth, but foolish and frivolous though she was, she shrank from the evil-doing that went on in her cousin's household. There was no effort at Nostel after anything true and noble in life and character. Low motives and poor ideals were uppermost, failings and weak points in each individual were encouraged. Her brother was tempted into intemperate habits, and his weak nature fell easily into the snare. Catherine hastily took her departure and went back to her mother and

the poor little home in Bedale, sadder and wiser than when she left them.

Greatly did Catherine Harrison need help to show her how to make the best of her surroundings, and how to find worthy objects for her energy. Exactly this kind of help awaited her in the next visit she was asked to pay. One day, a letter came from her old friend Mrs. Lindsey, whom Catherine had known and loved as Archdeacon Blackburne's step-daughter at Richmond, and this letter contained an invitation to her old home, the vicarage at Catterick, which she had left two years before. Catherine was delighted with the prospect of seeing her old friend again, and on the appointed day she mounted the horse that, according to the fashion of the times, was to carry her and her saddlebags over the few miles of country road that lay between Bedale and her destination.

In due time came the first sight of the ancient steeple; soon she was riding along the road among the Catterick houses, and shortly afterwards she dismounted at the low wall of the vicarage garden, and all the well-known trees of the shrubbery and the flowerbeds on the lawn lay before her.

Catherine knew nothing of the husband of her friend. Such a man as Theophilus Lindsey it had probably never been her fortune to meet before, and the home life she now entered upon opened a new world of ideas to her. The simple daily round of duties, the work for other people that began early in the morning and never seemed to end all day, and the motives for which all was done were a revelation of something undreamed of before to Catherine. Neglected village children were taught so patiently, sick people were visited and nursed, kindly, cheering words were always ready for those who were in trouble. There was never any question of what was most pleasant to do, or of what other people would say, only of what was right, and what was the next thing that *ought* to be done. Yet all was purest happiness. It was plain that the Vicar and his wife had learned to love their life at Catterick, and that Theophilus Lindsey hoped to end his days as the hard-working vicar of the parish. Every day Catherine learned some fresh lesson from her friends. She told them of her sad experiences at Nostel, and from Mr. Lindsey's comments, for the first time in her life, she

gained the thought of the responsibility of every human being for the time and talents granted to him. When she saw how the smallest chance of usefulness was seized upon, and how a little seed sown by the hands of this wise husband and wife brought forth a great harvest of good, she began to think more hopefully of her own home life and its possibilities. By and by, as will be told hereafter, the narrow back streets and shabby little houses of Bedale felt the influence that Theophilus Lindsey and his wife had exercised over Catherine Harrison.

Sometimes, as he went about his work in this busy, useful life at Catterick, the Vicar asked himself, was it a dreary dream that had visited him years ago at Piddletown. Where had the fear gone that he must leave his work in the church, because of the doubts he could not solve? Sometimes he and his wife used to walk together in the meadows and refresh themselves with the sound of the rushing river and the sight of the wild flowers on its banks, and thank God for the hard work which seemed to make their lives so glad. Sometimes they went to Richmond to the Archdeacon's house, and the welcome they received there was always a

hearty one. Probably the Archdeacon spoke more of parish interests with his visitor than of difficulties concerning the doctrines of the Trinity or any matters of belief, for he would rather lull to sleep the doubts and speculations of an inquiring mind than lose a hard worker and a good pastor out of the Established Church.

CHAPTER III.

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

WHILE young Lindsey in his boyhood was still studying in the Leeds grammar school, a boy named Joseph Priestley, destined to be his friend in later years, was beginning life at Fieldhead, a hamlet of half-a-dozen houses, lying a few miles away from the busy Yorkshire town. His home was a little house of three rooms, strongly built of stone, and roofed with flags, with a few wind-blown trees about it, standing close to the hilly road which ran across the moors to Leeds. His father was a maker and dresser of cloth,—his mother's girlhood had been spent among farming people. Both parents came of hard-working, honest stock, added to this they were Nonconformists and their memories reached back to the dreary days before the Act of Toleration was passed, while life for the elders living in their child-

hood had been filled with care and danger. They called themselves Independents, and gloried in the creed which their fathers had endured many struggles to uphold. So this little lad, Joseph Priestley, was taught the Westminster catechism, and he learned from it that all men had fallen under a curse because of Adam's sin, and were enemies to God from their birth. He was taught that Christ's atoning sacrifice upon the cross would only save a chosen few from this curse—those who were converted and believed this creed with their whole heart and soul. A dreary lesson to teach a little child who should have had happy, loving thoughts of a tender Father and a heavenly home.

While the older members of the family spent the busy day in cloth-making and household work, Joseph acted as guardian to the little flock of younger brothers and sisters. Picture him, a delicate boy with stammering speech, watching the antics of the merry children on the the breezy common, thoughtful beyond his years when he should have been light-hearted and full of play, and finding his greatest pleasure in the study of the habits of the moor-

land insects. While he was still only a little lad his mother died. Then his aunt, Mrs. Keighley, a kind-hearted, well-to-do woman, took pity on the motherless, old-fashioned child and adopted him as her son.

After this, wider interests began to open before young Priestley. He was sent to school and there he worked so diligently that Latin, Greek, and Hebrew studies soon became a pleasure to him. His aunt, observing his thoughtful character and love of reading, said to him 'Joseph, you must be a minister,' and so the course of his future life was settled.

Mrs. Keighley held the same creed as her cloth-making brother who lived in the old moor-land cottage at Fieldhead, but she was broad-minded enough to value people who were good and honest even if they did not hold all the items of her own narrow belief. So, in his Aunt's house, Joseph used to see men who were not quite free from heresy, and to listen to their talk as they spoke of certain milder doctrines which they ventured to hope gave purer and tenderer thoughts of God and His dealings towards men than did the creed held by the Calvinists.

Perhaps it was for that reason that Joseph began, while still a boy, to doubt whether men were really doomed to everlasting wrath, and cast away from God because of Adam's sin. So, it came to pass, when he wanted to be made a member of the congregation to which his aunt belonged, the Elders of the little meeting-house refused to admit him to their communion, because he could not honestly say that he firmly believed in all the doctrines they held.

No wonder that the boy who was only beginning to grope after religious life went through great conflicts in those days. It was no easy matter to dare to differ from the wise Elders who were held in such respect, and it needed courage to question the beliefs he had been brought up to hold. Sometimes he was seized with terror lest, after all, he should be among the God-forsaken of whom he heard so much, and he longed for some sign to prove to himself that his conversion had truly taken place. Troubled in mind, he began to suffer also in body, was declared consumptive, and for a time the plans for his future were changed. All idea of his being a minister was abandoned; arrangements were made for a clerkship in a

Spanish merchant's office; preparations for the voyage were begun, when his health showed signs of improvement, and the decision was for a time postponed.

In Mrs. Keighley's quiet, well-ordered household the days passed with little variety. The chapel and the various meetings connected with it formed a large part of the interests of the little family. Sundays were almost as strictly kept as the Sabbath had been among the Jews in ancient days; no unnecessary work was done, even a walk in the pleasant sunshine was discouraged, and the lagging hours were spent either in silent reading and meditation, or in class and worship. Life in general went on within very narrow limits; the love of beauty and art found no congenial soil in this Puritan household, and Joseph was taught to look upon plays and romances with aversion.

Time passed, and after he left school he read by himself for a couple of years, studied geometry, algebra, and mathematics with the dissenting minister who lived in the neighbourhood, and taught Hebrew to a local preacher of no education, who was glad to learn from Mrs. Keighley's studious nephew. Then the ques-

tion arose where should he go for the further studies which were to fit him for the ministry. For Theophilus Lindsey this question had been easily settled, but Cambridge would not open her doors to a dissenter. However, the Nonconformists had academies of their own in various parts of England, and the choice by and by was made of one in Daventry, a Northamptonshire town. Doubtless the Elders of his aunt's chapel had had a word to say about this matter, and for the following reason.

It will be remembered that when the days of persecution were ended by the passing of the Act of Toleration, the Dissenters had joined together to build chapels which should take the place of the hiding-places in town and country where they had so long met to worship in fear and trembling. For some years harmony endured, but when the danger of a common foe was over, these dissentients from the Established Church had began to differ again among themselves. In a few words it is enough to say that varieties of opinion such as Joseph Priestley had met with in the Elders and the heretics who visited at his aunt's house were to be found among the Nonconformists all over England. A

large party among them held firmly to the Westminster confession and the creeds which Joseph Priestley had been taught in his early days; they framed various trust-deeds for their chapels to enforce the same beliefs on future generations who should meet to worship there when they had passed away, and they required a confession of faith from every minister and member of their congregations.

On the other hand, there were many thoughtful men among the Nonconformists, who questioned the wisdom of this requirement, who desired to give liberty to all to read and interpret the Bible teachings as they chose, and to form their belief accordingly, who wished to pass down no narrow trust-deed to the future owners of their chapels, and were trying to think out for themselves thoughts about God and Christ and the future destiny of men such as they could hold with a wise mind and a loving heart. Independents and Presbyterians were the names these two great divisions of the Nonconformists were known by, and though there were other sects besides these, they do not enter into the story of Joseph Priestley and need not be mentioned here.

A little contest arose before the choice of Joseph's academy was finally settled. His Aunt, who would have sent him to London to an academy where her own opinions were taught, had to give way to Joseph's more liberal friends who made choice of Daventry. Then, one day, he said good-bye to the little world where his youth had been spent and set out on his journey to Northamptonshire. Daventry was a busy town even in those days, and picturesquely situated, lying among wooded hills. In these new scenes Joseph Priestley found the little seat of learning which was to be his home for the next three years.

He entered on a happy life, made friendships among his fellow-students which grew firmer in succeeding years, and marvelled at the free thought and open discussions which were permitted among them. For in this unpretending academy, hidden away among the Northamptonshire hills, were to be found the varieties of creed which obtained among the differing Nonconformists in England. The two tutors who were at the head of the academy encouraged free discussion on all subjects among their students, led them to read and

think for themselves and to search after truth with reverent minds. Young Priestley found himself more and more inclined to differ from the theology taught to him in his childhood. Slowly he was growing into a higher and happier faith, and all the time he kept in view his future calling and only one trouble drew a cloud over the sunshine of those years at Daventry. How could *he* ever make an eloquent preacher and draw crowds to listen to all he longed to say when he could only speak with a stammering tongue? In vain he tried various modes of cure. There were the thoughts within him ready to be uttered, the good tidings to tell, yet the words only came forth so slowly! The poor youth thought he knew the meaning of the words 'a thorn in the flesh.' When the time came for him to leave college, he was thankful, on account of this impediment in his speech, to accept an invitation to a little chapel at Needham Market, in Suffolk, and to begin his ministry there to a small congregation.

The arrival of a new preacher in a quiet country-town made a sensation among the inhabitants. For six months many people came to hear what he had to say. He gathered

the children together in classes, he lectured to the grown-up people, and kept back nothing of the new light that had altered his religious creed. The elders of the chapel in his Yorkshire home would have missed in his preaching a great deal that they used to think needful to salvation; and when it was found that no mention of the doctrine of the Trinity nor of the dreadful doom for men, nor the 'scheme of salvation' for a few chosen ones was heard from his pulpit his hearers shook their heads, and declared him 'unsound.' By and by as the Sundays came round, he began to look down upon empty benches and to miss sadly the faces that had greeted him at first.

Partly because of his heresy, partly on account of his stammering speech, young Priestley was not invited to preach in the neighbouring chapels—ministers were wanted here and there; but few people asked his help. In a while the promised stipend failed. This young minister, who so much loved freedom of thought, would not accept the sum of money hitherto granted for the support of the chapel from a fund held by the Independents, for such a grant would require the maintenance of a special

creed. To his other burdens was now added, the anxious search for a means of living. It was a lonely time for a youth with life's work opening before him—despised and neglected by his fellow-men, so poor as sometimes to doubt where he should find food and clothing and harassed by the impediment in his speech which hindered his usefulness. Yet Joseph Priestley was not unhappy at Needham. He was doing his best, though his sphere of work might be small. Thanks to a good Quaker living near him, he had no lack of books—he had time to study, and in his solitude he wrote pamphlets on religious subjects which were afterwards published, and he found hope and courage in the thought that his own views were growing clearer every day, and that he was pressing forward in his search after the truth.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Keighley could not follow her nephew in his change of creed. It troubled her that he should throw off so completely all connection with the Independent body to which his relatives belonged, and she made it plain to him that for the future he must rely on his own efforts: she had given him an education and her money was needed elsewhere. It was quite

evident to him that he must depend upon himself: so his story tells how, step by step, he faithfully followed wherever duty seemed to lead, and the hard lessons he learned in his uphill path formed for him a noble character in the end.

Now it happened that a few poor industrious and thoughtful men were members of a small congregation at Nantwich, in Cheshire, and they sent an invitation to this liberal-minded young minister at Needham to become their teacher. The proposal came at the right time: fortune was at a very low ebb with Joseph Priestley—sometimes he thought starvation threatened him: he had tried lecturing and had proposed lessons on very low terms in classics and mathematics—but pupils did not present themselves, for his heresy had given him a bad reputation. He gladly accepted the new invitation to Nantwich; and there, in the tiny Presbyterian chapel, built in an obscure part of the town, he gave his best thoughts every Sunday to the handful of hard-working men who came thankfully to listen to him on their one day of rest.

In Nantwich, he was not shunned as a heretic,

and in time he determined to add to the usefulness of his life there by opening a school. It should be the very best school possible, on that he was determined. He had no inclination for the work to which he was partly driven by poverty, as well as by the wish to be of use: but as is always the case when a man throws his heart into what he is about, teaching became a great enjoyment to him and soon his school promised to succeed. Then out of this step so wisely taken, there came before long a new chance in life to Joseph Priestley. For the news of his success as a schoolmaster spread beyond the little town of Nantwich, and in 1761 he was invited to Warrington to take the post of teacher of languages in an academy recently established there. Here, surely, he would be able to reap the harvest of all his industry in youth, when hour after hour, with small help and no encouragement but the love of learning for its own sake, he had laid the foundation, while still living with his aunt in Yorkshire, for the knowledge of languages which he now possessed. Few men were so well fitted for this post now offered to him at Warrington. Besides this, the experiences he had passed through

made him able to be a wise helper of young students, to encourage them to think for themselves, to trust the workings of their own minds, but to think reverently and with great humility, remembering how vast a universe lay round them and how little they could hope even to guess about.

Another reason tempted Joseph Priestley to accept the invitation. Liberal Presbyterians had founded this academy and they sought to provide broad religious training for young men who were to be their future ministers, and who were excluded by reason of their dissent from the University learning of Oxford and Cambridge. So for all these reasons Priestley went to Warrington Academy, an unpretending little college in those days, but destined to be very famous in the history of the Nonconformist body.

One of the great events of his life happened during his abode in Warrington. He went to London to spend a holiday and there met the celebrated Benjamin Franklin who, by that time had made his great discovery as to the nature of lightning and was one of the most famous electricians in the world. Now Joseph

Priestley had been studying chemistry and electricity, and slowly and laboriously, self-taught, he had been making experiments in the leisure he could save from his busy life, contenting himself with the simplest home-made instruments. Franklin, fifty years before, had been a printer's errand boy in Boston. He knew well the help of a friendly hand and encouraging word, and when he became acquainted with Joseph Priestley and saw how he was earnestly striving hard to gain knowledge, he willingly gave both his sympathy and help. Dr. Franklin encouraged him to persevere and to write a history of the discoveries made in electricity, and while still at Warrington, Priestley's successful labours were rewarded by the title of Doctor of Laws conferred upon him by the University of Edinburgh.

Time passed and there was a longing in Dr. Priestley, stronger even than his growing love of science, and this great desire grew and grew and made itself felt through all the interests of his busy life. Far away among the memories of the past lay the narrow Calvinistic creed which he had been taught to believe when a child. Gradually, step by step, as in every

other progress in his life, he had been growing into a nobler faith, and now he longed eagerly to tell his fellow-men the religious creed to which he had attained. In the year 1767 came the chance to do so.

He had been six years at Warrington, when a great Presbyterian Congregation worshipping in Mill Hill Chapel, Leeds, wanted a minister, and invited Dr. Priestley to take the post. At one time, the impediment in his speech might have stood in his way, but very wisely for some years past he had persevered in reading aloud for some time each day slowly word by word, and this wearisome effort had, to some extent, lessened his stammering. At all events, his hearers ceased to remember that his words came less fluently than did those of other preachers, when they found the doctrines that he preached so helpful to their lives. Was it not a wonderful change for them, instead of the doctrine of the Trinity, to be told of one God the Heavenly Father; instead of the curse laid on fallen man for Adam's sin, to be told that *all* men were the children of God; instead of the atonement offered by Christ upon the cross for human sin, to hear that each one must account

for his own deeds; and that forgiveness was freely granted to every penitent soul who tried to follow the loving example of Jesus Christ—in this way the Saviour of men in very deed. No wonder that a preacher who believed these tenets, so seldom held in those days, should be willing if need be to put his much-loved scientific studies on one side, and if need be to suffer persecution for their sake.

So the Presbyterian congregation worshipping at Mill Hill, Leeds, had Dr. Priestley as its leader, and he preached his liberal theology to ready listeners. Just across the hills along the winding moorland road lay Fieldhead and the little stone cottage where his childhood had been spent. Not far away stood the chapel where the good elders had refused him membership when a boy and the home where his aunt's kindness had given him an education. Tender memories were all of them and sacred too were all the experiences of the uphill path he had trodden since those days. Step by step he had been led out of difficulty: if greater perils were still to come surely he had gained confidence and trust enough to face them bravely.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

WHEN Catherine Harrison returned to Bedale after her visit to Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey at Catterick, the whole aspect of the place seemed changed to her. She lived in the same shabby little house as before, and the commonplace market town, with its dull, narrow streets, was unaltered; but a new light shone over everything. For her friends had given her higher aims and new objects in life, and now her one inspiring thought was to find some ways by which she could make the corner of the world she lived in better and happier for her presence there. She had brought home with her a store of books to read; but better still she had brought a wish to be of use. So she asked herself, 'What can I do to help other people?' and she soon found an answer to her question.

Idle, untaught children ran about the streets

of Bedale on Sunday. There were no Sunday schools then, and the little ones might get into mischief and spend the long day as they chose. Catherine called to mind how she had seen the boys and girls of Catterick gather round Mr. Lindsey on a Sunday afternoon, to listen with eager interest to the lessons he taught them in the intervals between the church services. She would do the same kind of work in Bedale, though it must be on a very much smaller scale. It was true that the only room in which she could call her scholars together was the tiny back kitchen in her mother's house, and there was space in it for only three or four children at a time. But where there's a will there's a way. A new spirit had entered into Catherine Harrison, and she gathered the little ones in from the streets,—one class succeeding another during the afternoon, and Sundays lost their dreariness to both teacher and pupils.

But so unusual a deed was soon discussed by the idle people in that little country town. Catherine was said to be a very singular young woman. No doubt she was well-meaning; but she was quixotic and ridiculous,—a person to be avoided, and the young people of Bedale ceased

to associate with her. Not a very long time had elapsed since this treatment would have made her very unhappy. *Now,* she ceased to ask or to care what other people said or thought about her actions, if she were trying to do right. So the Sunday classes went on week after week. She learned to know the parents of her scholars. They welcomed her to their poor homes, and she found many ways of helping them, and learned many lessons from them in return. She could no longer say that there was nothing useful or profitable to be done in her dull life. Happily, Catherine was only seven miles away from Catterick. The short distance was soon accomplished, and she was often invited for a few days to the Vicarage, whence she never failed to carry home with her a fresh stock of hope and courage.

Meanwhile Theophilus Lindsey and his wife were becoming every year more attached to their people and their work. The wants of his parishioners left the Vicar little time for meditation. He was constantly at work for them. No wonder that in return they loved him heartily. He wished for nothing better than to spend his days in their service.

In course of time, however, he fell ill. An attack of rheumatic fever confined him to his room; his active life for the time was at an end, and from being a worker he became again a student and a thinker. In the silence of his chamber the old difficulties and doubts, that had ceased to assert themselves as he went about his active parish work, pressed again into his mind and would not be silenced. 'What right have I,' he asked himself, 'Sunday after Sunday, to make use of words in the Church service that I do not believe are true?' 'Is it possible,' so he asked himself, 'to worship the Father in spirit and in truth, when I say one thing and mean another, when, for instance, I believe in one God the Father, but use the printed words that plainly speak of the Trinity, of three Gods in one?' No man ought to do evil even though it may seem to lead to good results; and a voice within seemed to say to him that all his good work among his people could not atone for any want of honesty in words. His thoughts went back to the day when he had promised 'to conform to the liturgy of the Church of England as it is now by law established.' Was he faithful to his

promise when he said the phrases of the liturgy with his lips, but gave another meaning to them in his heart? One after another the arguments used by the Archdeacon and the other wise Churchmen whom he had consulted when he lived at Piddletown, rose up before him; but they seemed no longer to give ease to his conscience, and at length he sadly told his wife of the great trouble that oppressed him. With the quick insight of a good, loving woman Mrs. Lindsey entered into her husband's thoughts. She encouraged him to make any sacrifice for the sake of honesty. She was ready to leave their happy home and go with him, if need be, into solitude and poverty; and no fear of the hardships that must befal them, if he were to resign his benefice, influenced her thoughts.

The Vicar of Catterick stood at the parting of the ways. Before him, on one side, lay the narrow path of self-sacrifice for righteousness' sake; on the other, the broad path of assured ease and comfort, with the honour of his fellow-men. Think of the choice which lay before him! On the one side, his dear old church and home, his interest and work and livelihood, and

the people he loved; on the other, the loss of all these treasures, the pain of breaking from the ties which had always bound him to the Church of England, the anger and derision of his friends, and the agony of bringing this sorrow also on his wife. Yet the true-hearted couple faced this trouble bravely, and they agreed together to do their duty whatever it might cost them. But as *one* chance still remained whereby it *might* be possible even for Theophilus Lindsey, with his changed views, to remain in the Church of England, they resolved to say nothing at present of their intentions to the Archdeacon or their other friends, but to wait and hold themselves in readiness to act when the time came.

While Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey were in this uncertainty about their future, an invitation came to them to spend a few days at Archdeacon Blackburne's home at Richmond. They were to meet there Dr. Priestley, of Leeds, and his friend the Rev. William Turner, of Wakefield, both Nonconformist ministers, and well-known men. The Archdeacon was a liberal-minded man. Though a Churchman, he found pleasure in associating with the thoughtful

Dissenters of the time, and had lately made himself known to them by writing a book which he had called 'The Confessional,' in which he upheld liberty of belief for every man, and protested against the law which required subscription from the clergy to the liturgy and articles of the Church of England.

So it came about that during the summer of 1769, Theophilus Lindsey met Joseph Priestley, at Richmond, for the first time, and such a friendship sprang up between the two men, who, unknown to each other, had been following out somewhat of the same line of religious thought, that the anxious vicar opened his heart to the heretical dissenting minister, and told him about the trouble he was in. Deep in talk they wandered up and down the sunny garden paths, and Dr. Priestley listened to his new friend's talk, and as he listened his respect and admiration grew apace. But though he had broken away from the narrow bondage of his early creed, the experiences through which he had passed had been different from those which Theophilus Lindsey was then meeting. For, among the Nonconformists, the Presbyterians, as has been already said, differed from the

Independents, in whose boundaries Dr. Priestley's youth had been spent, in granting to their ministers greater freedom of belief and speech. Dr. Priestley had only, therefore, to pass over from one sect to the other to gain comparative liberty to preach according to the dictates of his conscience, if he could find a congregation that would give him a hearing; whereas Mr. Lindsey could find no refuge in the Established Church free from the subscription which had bound him to hold the orthodox faith. For this reason it came to pass that Dr. Priestley, falling back on his own experience, gave this advice to his troubled friend, 'Make what changes you wish in the liturgy of your Church, and leave it to your superiors to dismiss you if they will;' and, by reason of this difference in the two cases, the advice was not suited to the Vicar of Catterick's position.

The little visit to Richmond came to an end, and the Vicar and his wife went home to Catterick. There they talked over the new counsel Dr. Priestley had given; but the more he thought about it the more certain did Theophilus Lindsey become that if matters remained as they were he must give up his benefice, if he

wished to retain peace of mind and a pure conscience.

More than a hundred years behind us lie the days of which this story tells,—days when the comforts of life were much fewer than they are now; when clumsy stage-coaches carried travellers where railways now run; when belated foot-passengers went at risk of their lives along the dimly-lighted streets of towns; and there were few links to bind even the members of the same nation together. More marked still than the progress in material comforts, as we look back a hundred years, is the contrast to be found in the state of opinion prevailing in those days and in our own time. *Then*, the nation at large was only beginning to awaken out of the slumber which had fallen upon it as regards theological interests, after William the Third's Act of Toleration was passed. It was not then as now a matter of every-day occurrence for a man to think for himself on all points, and even to formulate a new creed if he chose, unchallenged by the rebukes of his fellow-men who share an equal liberty. Yet even then, Theophilus Lindsey, looking into the future, could see signs of

change that might if all went well release him from his perplexities. For the freer religious thought beginning to dawn again among the Nonconformists, and showing itself among a few liberal Churchmen, as in Archdeacon's Blackburne's book, 'The Confessional.' was rousing certain men to see the need of greater freedom for the clergy. A plan was on foot to petition Parliament for relief in the matter of subscription, so that it might become lawful for a clergyman to declare his assent to the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures, instead of being compelled to sign his belief of the Articles and the Book of Common Prayer.

With all his heart, Theophilus Lindsey wished success to this scheme. With joy he heard that a number of earnest-minded men had met together in London to consult as to ways and means, and had established a band of workers in the cause, under the title of the 'Feathers' Tavern Association.' Their plans were formed; they had framed a petition to Parliament; but the hardest work still remained to be done. Signatures must be gained to their petition, and few men were willing to travel through the winter's snow over bleak moors and dangerous roads on such an errand.

When Theophilus Lindsey heard what was wanted, he was ready to be the messenger. Through biting winds and sweeping rain, over steep, rocky ways, by almost impassable paths he rode on his dangerous way two thousand miles through Yorkshire, and wherever there was a chance of gaining a signature to the petition he carried with him, he stopped and made his eager request. But, alas! too many easy-going men saw no need of any change in the law; others gave their good wishes; but when the question came whether they would add their names to the paper put before them for their signature, the timid souls drew back, fearing the consequences to themselves of such an act. At many a dwelling, the weary traveller, who sadly needed rest and sympathy, met with only abuse for daring to rouse a spirit of heresy and awaken new conflicts in the Church. In the end, the petition, with two hundred and fifty names appended, lay awaiting presentation to the House, and Theophilus Lindsey made preparations to travel in February to London, that he might be in Parliament when the debate on the subject took place.

That winter there was great trouble in

Catterick, and the poor people learned to value their Vicar and his wife more highly than ever before. Small-pox broke out, and spread quickly, especially among the children. Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey were constantly at work, administering medicine, nursing the sick, and comforting the dying. At their own cost, they provided for the inoculation of those who were not yet attacked; and in their ceaseless work for others they forgot their own anxieties for a time.

Before the epidemic was at an end, February came, and with it, Mr. Lindsey had to take his departure for London. His brave wife cheered his failing courage. When he hesitated to leave her alone amid such peril and anxiety, her hopeful words consoled him as he parted from her and went on his solitary journey southwards. The 6th of February, 1772, was a memorable day, for on that day the petition which had cost so much labour was presented to the House of Commons by Sir William Meredith, member for Liverpool. Theophilus Lindsey sat among the clergy, who were admitted to hear the debate, and for eight hours he listened to the speakers who supported or condemned the

cause he had at heart. How much those men had yet to learn who believed that the peace and safety of the Church of God depended on the security of the Articles and creeds which human councils, so prone to error, had drawn up. Thus the Vicar of Catterick thought and thanked God for the steadfast, simple faith which lay behind them all, and which he knew no honest doubt of all these could ever shake. The early dusk fell over London, the House was lighted, hour after hour passed, and still the debate went on. At last came the division, and the eager waiting for the result. Seventy-one had voted in favour of the petition,—two hundred and seventeen against it. The House rose, and with it the little company of clergymen who had gathered for that night in London from many distant parts of England. As they interchanged their parting words beneath the midnight sky, the greater number of them, notwithstanding the defeat, were full of hope for the future. 'We will try again next year,' they said to each other, 'the right must surely win.' But Theophilus Lindsey, who knew how much he had at stake, turned sadly away, and felt that for him there was no waiting for what

another twelve months might bring forth. He must be true to his convictions and help on the cause of religious liberty by his own example. Next day he began his homeward journey, but before he left London he thought of the sick children in his dear, old Catterick parish, and turning from the great anxiety which, for many other men, would have overpowered all trifling matters, he paid a visit to the Tower, and carried home with him some new, shining halfpence to console the little ones recovering from the small-pox in their weariness and pain.

CHAPTER V.

FAREWELL TO CATTERICK.

THE warm Spring sunshine was bringing out the young, green leaves in the Vicarage garden at Catterick, before the small-pox epidemic had disappeared from the parish. Then the Vicar was at liberty to prepare for the great change in his life which he had resolved to make. And his first care was to make plain the reasons for the step he was about to take. No one must suppose that he was idly or carelessly giving up the work to which so many years before he had solemnly vowed to dedicate his life. He must prepare some written explanation which the public at large could read, some plain statement of the change of view which led him to sever himself from the Established Church.

For this act could not remain unnoticed by his fellow-men. He knew well that for a clergyman to renounce the doctrine of the

Trinity, an offence punishable by law, was a very different matter from a similar act by a Nonconformist minister like Dr. Priestley. In Dr. Priestley's case, it might pass almost unnoticed beyond the circle of his immediate acquaintances, for the law had lately been practically a dead letter: but he, a priest of the State Church, would draw all men's eyes upon himself. So he began to write his 'Apology,' and again and again when about his task, in his silent study, his heart used to sink within him at the prospect of the trouble he was bringing on his wife: the homeless life, the poverty, the broken friendships, the loss of all the old associations which were so dear to them both. And yet, how grand was the cause in which they were to suffer! With this thought he would take fresh courage and thank God who had led him, as he believed, back from the creeds invented by men to the simple Christianity of the New Testament gospels.

Time had been passing quickly with Theophilus Lindsey. It was not easy to believe that more than ten years had gone by since he had declined the Duke of Northumberland's offer of promotion in the Church for the

sake of remaining a hard-working Vicar in a country parish. Such was the case, however, and still after this long lapse of time, his noble friend and patron bore in mind the conscientious clergyman who loved his work so well. So it happened, that just at this period when Mr. Lindsey was engaged in writing his 'apology' and preparing to take the new step that conscience commanded, a letter came from the Duke inviting the Vicar to visit him at his seat in Northumberland. Perhaps it was a wish for sympathy, perhaps a feeling of gratitude that led Theophilus Lindsey to lay down his pen and set forth on a short visit to Alnwick Castle. Perhaps, almost unknown to himself, the trouble about his wife's future partly led him there: and he, who cared nothing about the prospect of poverty for himself had a faint hope that some new mode of making a livelihood might be suggested by the powerful Duke when the story of his trouble was made known.

It was a wearisome journey through the wild Northumberland country; and when at last he crossed the bridge over the river Aln and began to ascend the steep hill-side it was a cheerful prospect to see the towers and battlements of the grand Castle full in view. The Duke received the tired traveller hospitably and no kindness that could be shown to him was wanting. Very soon he made it plain to his visitor that honourable posts in the Church were still waiting his acceptance if he were ready to take them. And this opened the way for Mr. Lindsey to give the account of his change of views. The Duke and Duchess listened with surprise. They could not understand how for a few 'trifling scruples' he could banish himself from home and position and friends. In fact, it is said that 'his words seemed to them as idle tales' and it never entered the thoughts of the noble owner of Alnwick Castle that he could be of any use to him in such an emergency.

His visit ended, and Theophilus Lindsey rode back again on his long journey to Catterick. One door of hope was closed, but though the future seemed dark, the duty of the immediate present was still clear, and he wasted no time in vain regrets. Soon afterwards, another important event happened. The Vicar of Catterick was invited to preach the Assize sermons at York. A large congregation

gathered together in the Minster, and he spoke to them of the late petition to Parliament and touched all hearts by his solemn words on the *real* test of membership in the Church of God. Surely, he thought, as he looked round on the great assembly, there must be many souls here who have learned like myself to turn back to the simple words of Christ about the Father in Heaven—men and women who can find no rest in the doctrines of the Trinity and the Atonement which the Church enjoins, and who need a reformed place of worship where Christians of all denominations who love God and their fellow-men and try to follow Christ's example, may find a religious home. Whatever might be the risk, *that* was the work that lay before him, to establish such a reformed Church and religious home. Yet only to one person in York did he say anything of the burden on his mind. This person was an old College friend, in residence at the Cathedral, a man who had been his companion in his youthful days, when full of fresh enthusiasm he had taken orders in the Church. Since then, the two men had gone very different ways in life. Theophilus Lindsey, as we know, had been

a hard-working parish clergyman and had learned to know the doubts and difficulties of ordinary hard-working men and women. His friend, the Rev. W. Mason, had lived under the shadow of the venerable Church; he had taken the truth of all her dogmas for granted and had never gone below the surface in the easy social intercourse which he enjoyed in the drowsy Cathedral town. Mr. Lindsey's deep religious questionings seemed to this man the foolish scruples of a visionary. It was his belief that mere forms of words could injure no one, and he bade his scrupulous friend think of his wife and all the troubles he was bringing upon her.

There was no need to remind the tender-hearted husband of this prospect; but the warning of his old companion brought it more clearly than ever before him: it weighed upon him through all his homeward journey, and a weary-hearted man he went back to finish his 'Apology.'

Then came the time when he must send in his resignation to his Bishop. This brought forth a friendly letter in reply with an urgent request that he would reconsider his decision and if possible remain in the Church and hope

for a return to his former views. It was useless advice to Theophilus Lindsey, who only wondered more every day why he had not given up his living a dozen years before.

The hardest trouble of all had to be met when he could no longer delay, but must break the painful news to the Archdeacon and his family at Richmond. Mrs. Blackburne's grief was acute. The close intercourse with her daughter must be severed by the removal from Catterick; not only so, there was no prospect that the breach between the Archdeacon and his son-in-law would be healed. So troubles multiplied. As the news became known, other friends turned coldly from the Vicar. He received letters of remonstrance and condemnation. Pity was showered upon his wife, and some of her old friends even ventured to ask her to leave her husband to his fallen fortunes and seek a refuge with them.

Meanwhile Catherine Harrison's visits from Bedale went on at intervals, and it came to pass that both husband and wife began to find a valued friend in the young girl whose society they had at first sought out of pity. For her character was strengthening; she felt a love

of duty for its own sake, and high principles were now her guides to action. She walked alone in paths where formerly she would have shrunk from following those who led. Now she could encourage her former teachers. Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey heard no words of regret from her for the loss she would feel when they left Catterick, nor did she sadden them by any gloomy forebodings. She was proud of their courage and their faithfulness to conscience, and had resolved to declare herself also a Unitarian and to accept all the inconveniences and troubles that must follow such a deed. Many kind letters came to the Vicar and his wife at this time from Mr. Turner at Wakefield. He was a minister of great influence among the Liberal Dissenters in the North of England, and he offered to recommend Mr. Lindsey to the pulpit of the Octagon Chapel, in Liverpool, which was then unoccupied. This gave promise of a livelihood, but it did not fall in with Mr. Lindsey's views, who wrote thus in reply:—'With regard to what you kindly suggest, I believe it will be best to wait and not lay out for anything of this kind at present. My reason is that my design is to try to

gather a Church of Unitarian Christians out of the Established Church, and when I go to town, which will be in the beginning of the winter, I shall do all I can to forward it. My duty is to lead those who are in the darkness I was brought up in, to worship the One True God, and not to attach myself to those who are already free from darkness. As to our future provision, now and then I feel gloomy, but no doubt our own industry and the friends God raises up will furnish what is needful.'

And where was Dr. Priestley all this time? He who had been the first to show sympathy to Theophilus Lindsey in his perplexities? Dr. Priestley was no longer a resident in Yorkshire, and the story of his experiences since their meeting in the Archdeacon's garden at Richmond must now be told, and will show that he also had had disappointments and trials to bear. For he held a creed that many men in those days called blasphemous. Moreover, he was a believer in granting liberty of thought to everyone: he held that human reason must be used in religious questions no less than in all other inquiries; that like all our other faculties this reason is given to us

by God; and, while superstitious and timid men would forbid the labours of reverent searchers after truth, he was always the fearless defender of freedom in thought and speech. So he met with opponents who raised a fierce outcry against his daring, and all was not smooth sailing for the liberal minister of Mill Hill Chapel.

When he had first made his home in Leeds, Dr. Priestley was gladly welcomed by his large, liberal-minded congregation, and a wide field of useful work apparently lay open to him. He set on foot classes for the young people, wrote books on religious subjects for their use, and encouraged in them the free and reverent spirit of inquiry which had been granted to him at Daventry in his own young days. While at Leeds, too, he edited a magazine of liberal religious thought called the 'Theological Repository.' In its columns he published sermons and doctrinal tracts and new and corrected versions of wrongly translated texts, and in all this work his friend the Rev. William Turner of Wakefield took an active part. Nor did this complete the story of his well-filled time. Dr. Priestley,

as has been said, was a reverent searcher after truth. In his view there should be no conflict between religion and science, and true to his belief that all our powers are God given, he threw himself earnestly into the studies which Dr. Franklin had encouraged him to pursue, and made experiments in chemistry which resulted in important discoveries concerning the air we breathe. For this work he needed instruments, and poverty compelled him to make his own. His apparatus, in consequence, was of so simple and novel a kind that to insure accuracy, he had to repeat his experiments again and again. Yet this delay was not without its advantages, for it made each step in his progress very correct, and being obliged to follow new modes of operation, he was led to make discoveries which he could not have reached if he had followed closely in the footsteps of other scientific men.

Probably many readers of this story know how the famous Charles Darwin gained inspiration and skill for his future scientific work from his cruise round the world in the government brig 'Beagle.' One day, to the great

joy of Dr. Priestley, a similar chance was apparently within his grasp, and he knew well how to value the worth of such a means of education. Captain Cook was about to start on a second voyage of discovery in the Southern seas, and the proposal was made to Priestley that he should sail with the expedition in the position of Naturalist. What an opening for the man who had led such a struggling life and who had gained his scientific training through hard and thorny paths! He was delighted with the prospect. Arrangements were made with his congregation—on his side all was ready: but, after all, the appointment was given to someone else; for objections were raised against Dr. Priestley's 'religious principles' by certain men in whose hands the choice lay.

Just at this time, Lord Shelburne, a well-known literary man, was living in retirement near Calne, in Wiltshire. He made an offer to Dr. Priestley of leisure to carry out his chemical studies, a good salary, and a comfortable home in return for his literary companionship, a few hours every day. Dr. Priestley had now two boys growing up, and

a delicate wife, and there was little prospect at Leeds that he could give them the education and comforts they required. That was a strong argument in favour of accepting Lord Shelburne's invitation; but a still stronger remained. He saw that this offer gave him the chance 'to help Providence to knock imposture on the head.' By this strange phrase he meant to convey the idea that to overthrow superstition and ignorance by the discovery of clear, definite, scientific facts, and by proving the certainty of the Laws of Nature and the unchanging relation of cause and effect, as he hoped in his new leisure to help to do, was to do God's work among men. So, for these reasons, he gladly accepted Lord Shelburne's proposal, and seven years of stndious work, spent for the most part during the summers in retirement at Calne, followed. Chemistry was in its infancy as yet; by his patient labour, he established important facts in the science, and made his most important discovery of oxygen, one summer's day, when throwing the heat of the sun by means of a burning glass, on special chemical substances.

It was quite a new experience when in the

year 1774, Dr. Priestley set forth with Lord Shelburne to make a foreign tour. In course of time, they visited Paris, then the centre of a brilliant circle of eminent men—philosophers and scientific investigators—who were all ready with great enthusiasm to welcome the English stranger; for his fame as Fellow of the Royal Society, Doctor of Edinburgh University, and Gold Medallist of the Philosophical Society of England, had already reached them. Now these eminent French philosophers had turned their thoughts solely to the teachings of the senses and the outside world. An unseen universe and spiritual influences did not enter into their consideration. For the most part they were professed Atheists, knew and cared nothing about the Christian religion, and could not comprehend that anyone, who occupied himself with the subject, could deserve the name of a philosopher.

Dr. Priestley was well aware of their opinions, and with so many scientific interests in common, it was natural that he should wish to stand high in the regard of these strangers, who were among the foremost philosophers in Europe. Yet to the unfeigned astonishment, and at first

even to the contempt of this brilliant society, he at once declared himself a believer in Christianity. "Who is this curiosity from the English shores?" the Frenchmen asked each other. A scientific discoverer, and at the same time a religious man and a Christian minister! Stranger still, these French sceptics discovered that, compared with this religious faith, all his honours and titles and the possible friendship of the learned, were as nothing to Dr. Priestley. By degrees, they were impressed by his earnestness, probably, also, by the novel teaching of one who upheld the use of reason and liberty of thought in religious matters, and who asked men to believe in the simple words spoken by Christ, and not in the creeds made by after ages and disputing councils of the Church. Not long after this visit to Paris, Dr. Priestley wrote and published some 'Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever in Proof of God and Providence,' and we may suppose that he used in them the arguments which had won a hearing from some of the sceptics in Paris.

While these events had been taking place in Dr. Priestley's life, the Vicar of Catterick, as we have seen, had been preparing to break

away from his old bonds. The two men in their different spheres had been really doing similar kinds of work. Both were teaching that 'the old order changes, and God fulfils himself in many ways.' Dr. Priestley, by means of physical science, was bearing witness to the truth that there is no standing still in God's universe, that He is ever working through the changes and orderly progress we see around us; Theophilus Lindsey, to the truth that men's knowledge of God does not remain stationary, that the old narrow creeds are outgrown in course of time and pass away, that while outward forms perish the inward faith may grow only more steadfast.

At Catterick, as the weeks passed, the courage of the Vicar and his wife grew apace. In one of his letters towards the end of his residence there, Mr. Lindsey says, 'Though at first I was hardly master of myself to do anything properly, all such trials are now over. I have found great difficulty and opposition already, and expect to find more. My greatest comfort and support under God, is my wife, who is a Christian indeed, and worthy of a better fate in all worldly things than we can

have a prospect of. For we leave a station of ease and abundance, attended with many other agreeable circumstances. Thanks be to God, we have not given way to ease and indulgence, and can be content with little.'

There were still times when the husband and wife could take their favourite walks together through the meadows by the river side, and still Mr. Lindsey could spend quiet hours in his study among his much-loved books, which would soon no longer be his own. One day, he was turning over the leaves of an old volume, when he came upon these words :—

'When thou canst no longer continue in thy work without dishonour to God, discredit to religion, foregoing thy integrity, and wounding conscience, thou must believe that God will turn thy very silence and suspension to his glory and the advancement of his gospel. A soul that desires to serve and honour him shall never want opportunity to do it. He can do it by his silence as well as by his preaching,—by laying aside as well as by continuance in thy work.'

The words were almost startling,—so closely did they apply to his own case. They came

like a cheering message out of the far-away past, like a voice from one of the brave men of old, whose example he had dwelt upon so often in his trouble, that sometimes their silent forms had seemed to gather about him for his encouragement and help. And the writer of the words *had* been one of those two thousand noble, Nonconforming clergymen, who had given up their parishes and homes on St. Bartholomew's Day, in 1662, and gone forth with wives and children not knowing where to find their daily bread, rather than sign their assent to all contained in the Book of Common Prayer, as commanded by the 'Act of Uniformity.' One hundred years before! As he read the sentence Theophilus Lindsey turned in thought again to those true souls, felt himself strengthened as by a great host of witnesses, and forgot that he was blamed and renounced by his friends, and that he was a lonely man as far as the sympathy of his living fellow-beings was concerned.

The year 1773 drew to a close, and in November, one room after another at the Vicarage was dismantled, and plate and linen and furniture, and books which had been so lovingly

gathered together, were packed up and sent away to be sold. The last Sunday at the old church came. Strangers gathered there from curiosity who had never heard the Vicar preach before, and they sat among the people of Catterick, whose hearts were aching and whose tears were flowing with sorrow for the parting so close at hand. 'How this man has made himself beloved!' they said to each other, as they watched the people pressing round the church porch to receive their old friend's blessing as he passed.

These wondering strangers did not follow the Vicar to the outlying chapels on the moor, where it is said the simple-hearted farmers and peasants wept like little children when he took his leave of them. It was not easy to explain to them why he must say good-bye. A better man they had never seen, and they were content to think as he told them *he* thought, and to trust that every change he made in his creed was for the better. It was a relief to Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey when all the leave-takings were over, and the door was closed for the last time on the dear old empty house.

So they left Catterick, as they had come to

it, with the bleak winds whistling round them, the dead leaves rustling beneath their feet, and the mists gathering on the moors. And they went forth to their unknown destiny, with brave and trusting hearts.

CHAPTER VI.

'SUNSHINE IN A SHADY PLACE.'

CATHERINE HARRISON resolved to follow the fortunes of her friends for one stage, at least, upon their journey. They passed the first night in her mother's little home at Bedale, and next day she rode with them to Wakefield, where they were all invited by the Rev. William Turner to be his guests. The short visit came to an end only too soon, and at its close Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey set forth alone to continue their pilgrimage up to London. To Catherine, the parting from her friends was the sadder from her knowledge that they were almost without the means of living, and that hard judgments were continually being passed upon the brave Vicar of Catterick by the multitudes who could not understand his conscientious deed. His farewell sermon, which was published and widely read, was unsparingly abused. The

public press discussed it and a fierce attack upon him appeared in the 'York Chronicle,' misrepresenting his motives and perverting the language he had used. In the next issue of the paper, however, Catherine was delighted to read a warm defence of the Vicar, signed by 'A lover of all good men,' and she learned that this letter was written by Mr. Cappe, a non-conformist minister in the city of York.

'If I can do no more to help them,' thought Catherine, 'I can at least defend them when they are abused,' and following this course she soon began to share in their persecution. On her way home from Wakefield she went, according to invitation, to stay in the house of an uncle in Yorkshire. She met with a kind welcome and was very happy with her aunt and cousins; but when, as soon happened, her uncle learned that Theophilus Lindsey was her friend, and that she shared his religious views, she was told that she must take her leave at once, and was forbidden to re-enter the house. Other instances followed in which Catherine had to grieve over the loss of old friends for the same reason. What had become of the Catherine Harrison who at one time had fixed her hopes

on the support of rich relations, and had been moved in all she did by the desire for the good opinion of other people? *Now* conscience was the spring of all her actions, and for the sake of being true she did not hesitate to declare her change of belief, and her determination to find a more congenial place of worship than the Established Church on the first opportunity. She now no longer asked herself, what will other people think? or, whom shall I offend?

Catherine did not reach home till Spring had come, for she paid other visits on her way, and it was only when settled down in her old life at Bedale that she realized how much she had really lost in the departure of her Catterick friends. Her brother, discontented with his poor curacy, and always on the anxious watch for good fortune that never came, darkened the little house with his gloom and his complaints. But there was more need now than ever for cheerfulness and courage and brave Catherine resolved that she would not be wanting in these qualities.

There is little to say about her life at Bedale. She still called the idle children in from the streets on Sunday by two or three at a time and

taught them in the tiny kitchen, and still her neighbours shunned her as a singular young woman. Yet she sowed her good seed patiently and never murmured because the plot was small and the ground stony. Sometimes a friend, living at a distance, well-knowing where to find a willing helper, sent for Catherine, and she was away from home for a few weeks at a time. Then she would hasten back to her mother and put her whole heart into the narrow round of duties in Bedale.

One day, startling news broke the monotony of her life there. The discontented young curate announced to his mother and sister that the curacy was a thing of the past, that he had bought a large farm at Stankhouse, seven miles from Leeds, and was going to live there and make his fortune by farming. Catherine had no hope of his success, and it was a serious matter when a large share of her mother's little fortune went to stock the farm. By and by the young farmer pressed them to come and live with him at Stankhouse. It is to be feared that he had selfish reasons for making this request. Certainly Mrs. Harrison and her daughter did not consult their own wishes when

they gave up their little home at Bedale and went to the lonely farm, about the purchase of which they had not even been consulted.

The farmhouse, with its out-buildings, was built of grey stone. Within were cold, rambling passages and cheerless looking rooms; without, views over a wide, desolate common, broken only by the great mounds of rubbish and slack at the mouth of the yawning coal pits, and the cluster of poor cottages where the colliers and their families lived. But Catherine, who was determined to make the best of everything, found unexpected blessings even here. Coal was cheap at all events, and in winter they could have blazing fires to brighten the dull rooms. Best of all, there were poor people at hand who needed help which she could give, and very soon she had paid friendly visits to some of the huts at the colliery, and made acquaintance with the women and children who gladly welcomed her when they found the kindly spirit in which she came.

Skirting the common, ran the rough high road to Leeds. It was hot and dusty in summer, and in winter, when snow or rain had fallen, it was almost impassable for foot

passengers. Catherine found, to her great pleasure, that by help of the strong farm horses she could drive every Sunday the seven miles between Stankhouse and Leeds, and attend service in the Mill Hill chapel, where Dr. Priestley had been minister so long. So it became a habit with her to do so, and Sunday became as welcome a day at Stankhouse as it had been unwelcome at Bedale. About a mile from the farm across the common lay the village of Lazencroft. In country places pleasant neighbours are often to be met with, and Catherine and her mother were glad when Mrs. Edmonson, a resident at Lazencroft, came to see them, having heard of the arrival of two ladies at Stankhouse. Mrs. Edmonson was between seventy and eighty years of age, but retained the energy and all the interest in life of a much younger woman. She was delighted with Catherine's enthusiasm, and quickly fell in with her wish to help the families of the colliers, whose wives and daughters in the cottages by the pit's mouth were so wasteful and ignorant. By degrees, making friends with one poor woman after another, they established a female benefit club, encouraged them to save, taught

the younger ones to read and write, and brought new life into the settlement.

This work was a great enjoyment to Catherine. She was always ready to cross the lonely common however dreary the weather, and the pleasant greetings she received were ample reward. It was so delightful to feel she was really of use in that little corner of the earth. By and by troubles began to arise in her own home and she found it a relief to turn from her own anxieties and forget them in the greater sorrows of other people. The misgivings which Catherine had felt when she first heard of her brother's farming scheme, proved to have been not without foundation. Too late he learned that he had been deceived, and had paid far more for the Stankhouse farm than it was worth. Too late, he found that he had not the right qualifications for a farmer. His cattle fell sick and died from some unknown cause, and the men whom he employed had little respect for an idle intemperate master. To crown his misfortunes, he fell one day in a field and hurt his leg, was confined to bed, and there was no one to manage the affairs of the farm. Then bills were sent in and creditors came to the

house pressing for payment. Mrs. Harrison had already lent so much money to her son that she and Catherine had hardly enough to buy the clothes they needed. These troubles nearly overwhelmed the gentle old lady, and Catherine found that she must take new, unaccustomed burdens upon herself, and undertake for the time the management of affairs.

Her first step was to send for a doctor, who shook his head over her brother's condition; her next to examine his papers and see how much was really due to his creditors. Then, ready money had to be found to meet the bills that came in. For this purpose she persuaded her mother to sell part of the little estate that still belonged to her at Craven, and she borrowed £700 from an old friend of her own, taking upon herself the obligation of repaying the debt in course of time. Very slowly the sick man crept back into some measure of health—then arrangements were made for valuing the stock and selling the farm. Before this business was ended, sad news came from Mrs. Edmonson. In great distress the old lady sent to beg for Catherine's help. Her husband was stricken with typhus fever and she needed

companionship and comfort. She could turn to no one but the brave girl who seemed to be always ready to help everyone in trouble, and Catherine, with a little natural shrinking, went to her. The patient died, and when Catherine came to Stankhouse again she had to throw all her energies into the breaking up of the home. There was one bright spot amid all the shadow, this was the benefit club at the colliery, which was now in a prosperous condition; but Catherine grieved sorely when she said good-bye to all her grateful friends. Young Harrison, quite broken down in health, went to a curacy in the district of Craven, in Yorkshire. Mrs. Harrison and her daughter were once more without a dwelling-place. So ended another passage in Catherine Harrison's life.

CHAPTER VII.

ESSEX STREET CHAPEL.

THE Vicar of Catterick and his wife said good-bye to their old home in the month of November, 1773, but the New Year dawned before their pilgrimage to London was ended. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Disney, a liberal clergyman of the Church of England, invited them to break their journey by a visit to his house at Swinderby, near Newark. Mr. Disney was a member of the Feathers' Tavern Association, already mentioned, and had made the acquaintance of Theophilus Lindsey the previous year, when the petition for relief from compulsory subscription to the Articles had been presented to Parliament. He admired the spirit which had led the Yorkshire vicar to give up church and home, that he might be true to conscience in his words as well as in his thoughts; but so far, Mr. Disney, though dissatisfied with the

established liturgy, did not feel any call to tread the thorny path of a leader out of the old-accustomed ways. The example of fearless truthfulness had the weight, however, which all such examples must have in the long run; and in a few years, as we shall find, Mr. Lindsey found an active helper in this man.

It would have been strange, indeed, if Mrs. Lindsey had not often had to hide a heavy heart during this long time of unsettlement. By slow degrees she felt the distance increase between herself and her old home and friends. All the treasured possessions she had been used to see about her were gone, except a few books and a little plate, to the sale of which she and her husband trusted for their support when they reached London. When the last stage of their journey was over, and the coach landed them in the heart of the city, both travellers felt that it needed all the courage they possessed to meet the new experiences which awaited them.

There is a dull, old court out of busy Holborn which bears the name of Featherstone Buildings. Here on January 10th, 1774, Theophilus Lindsey and his wife hired a small

lodging. Two rooms, with a cupboard for a study, held their worldly goods. In the cupboard, one pile of books served for a table and another pile for a chair. What a change from their surroundings at Catterick! Instead of the large, airy dwelling and garden, was a dull London lodging, while walks in the crowded thoroughfares of Holborn and the Strand must take the place of restful rambles in the sunny meadows by the river Swale. Yet in Featherstone Court, Mr. Lindsey wrote in his journal: 'I have not known such quiet of mind and perfect peace with God for many years till now, and I would not exchange it for a thousand worlds.'

And now the 'Apology' was published, on which he had been so long at work. At first sight the title seems unsuited to the statement of views for which Mr. Lindsey had bravely sacrificed so much, and for which he had no wish to make excuse. The name had an ancient origin; when the early Christians were led before the Roman Emperor or Governors to offer a vindication of their faith, the declaration which they then made was known as their 'Apology,' and this title Mr. Lindsey

adopted when he launched his pamphlet into the world. He troubled himself little about its reception. He had freed his conscience, and had nothing to do with results. Yet he did not forget that in those days denial of the doctrine of the Trinity was still liable to penalty under the law of England; but this risk, like all others, he was ready to run.

By degrees, one piece after another of the little store of plate went to pay for food and lodging. Prospects must have seemed very cheerless, and the silence of so many old friends, who were now estranged, must have been very hard to bear. Faithful Catherine Harrison, however, visited them in their dull city home, though her stay could only be a short one, as they had neither space nor comforts needful for offering hospitality.

But time passed, and by degrees it became plain that the Vicar of Catterick had been right when he came to the conclusion that there were timid souls in England who only wanted a leader to declare themselves dissatisfied with the creed they held. Dr. Priestley came with Lord Shelburne to make some stay during the winter in London, and he spared no

pains in spreading abroad news of the project for opening a chapel where the Father only should be worshipped. Strangers who heard the news, who had read the Vicar's farewell sermon or his 'apology,' made their way to the court in Holborn to see and talk to the brave schemer, and some of them promised their support in his plan. A sum of £200 was raised in course of time to fit up an auction room in Essex Street as a church, and to insure the rent for two years. So light began to gleam through the darkness, and Theophilus Lindsey made another entry in his journal: 'If the work be of God, I hope it will succeed: should it fail some good will result, and others will find it easier to take up the task and go on better than I.'

And now another duty lay before him. This was the preparation of a liturgy differing as little as possible from the Church of England service, changes being made only in those phrases which he, and others who shared his religious views, could not in conscience use. By the beginning of April, the liturgy was ready for use, and the auction room was changed into a place of worship. But great

difficulties had still to be overcome. Certain persons, moved as they believed by zeal for church and crown, having heard of this revival of the Socinian heresy, which had made a stir in London some hundred years back, set to work to rouse opposition to the new chapel. Mr. Lindsey was told that the civil power was going to interfere; and rumours of the work going on in Essex Street having reached powerful quarters, some inquiries were made there as to the meaning of this project for a new chapel, and thereupon fresh warnings were sent to him that he was entering upon dangerous ground. The most important result of this agitation was the delay that followed in gaining a licence from the Westminster justices for holding a religious service in the old auction room. When this was at last granted, Sunday, April 17th, was fixed for the opening of the chapel; but all well-wishers feared that the day would not pass over without some popular disturbance in Essex Street, and they thought it not unlikely that Theophilus Lindsey himself might meet with insult and ill-treatment.

George III. had begun his reign fourteen

years before this time, with the declaration that he would maintain a spirit of toleration towards the opinions of his subjects. And without doubt the old spirit of persecution had received a check. But the *tendency* was still alive; men still held their own special dogmas as sacred; but they had not learned the duty of granting their fellow-men equal liberty for thought and speech in matters relating to religion. So now, in this instance, opponents of Theophilus Lindsey's views were eager in the wish that he might be silenced.

The spring sunshine brightened gloomy Essex Street on that memorable morning, April 17th, 1774, and the large upper room, in Essex House, which would hold three hundred persons, stood empty and ready for its first congregation.

Dr. Priestley, anxious for his friend's safety, came early, and little companies of curious strangers and sympathising friends mounted the stairs, till at last an assembly of about two hundred souls waited for the minister. There were men of standing and influence present, thoughtful people who had weighed his words in print, and gave him credit for

sincerity and earnestness, as well as men who were only 'eager to tell or to hear some new thing.' It was rumoured also that a government spy was in the midst. Deep was the silence when the preacher gave out this text for his first sermon—'Endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' Surely he could have chosen no theme more welcome to his hearers. Was not this heretical Vicar accused of leading the way to strifes and divisions in the National Church? How would he reconcile these words with his own actions?

In simple but stirring language he told the listeners that in his view God did not make the minds of men on one pattern. According to his own reason and in his own way, must each man seek the Father. Hence, there must of necessity be varied sentiments and diverse sects, and, however widely men might differ in creed, they could keep the unity of the Spirit by maintaining charitable judgments, and would never fail in true religion so long as they never lost warm love for God and man. He went on to speak of the simple Christianity he hoped to teach Sunday by Sunday in that

room, and certainly no words were spoken that day that could endanger the government. The congregation departed as peacefully as it had collected, and no mob gathered in the street below. Ministers of state ceased to trouble themselves about the little insignificant city chapel, and as time passed fresh citizens found their way there, until at length it was no uncommon event for disappointed late-comers to hear there was not room for them. But this state of things did not last. The novelty wore off. People who had been eager and curious at first, withdrew from the unpopular sect and the obscure room, and only the worshippers who were really in earnest remained. Among these were some well-known liberal thinkers and scientific men; and Mr. and Mrs. Rayner, relatives of the Duchess of Northumberland, proved themselves among the most faithful of Theophilus Lindsey's friends.

Still his friends did not altogether cease to expect an outburst of popular anger, for prejudice was so strong that there seemed no limit to the libels and falsehoods circulated against him. It was said, among minor accusations, that promises of money had led him to secede

from the Church of England; that his present position was really a more lucrative one than that which he had formerly held; and that his wife's relatives had settled £200 upon him when he gave up the living at Catterick. When these and similar statements reached him, he was at first hurt and indignant; but he was too thoroughly in earnest to care long what mere gossip said about him, and like a true man went on his way unmoved, contented if the voice of conscience told him he was right.

So, at last, Theophilus Lindsey had carried out his design. He had established a religious centre where men of all denominations might meet to worship One God the Father, apart from all speculations of the prayer book and the creed. He had opened a Unitarian Chapel in the heart of London, the only chapel in England which avowedly bore this name, though by this time other congregations among the English Presbyterians might hold similar views to those preached in Essex Street. Was he right or wrong in his theology? Which of us can answer positively? We are all half-blind gropers after truth, but 'God and duty

are certainties, and love and self-sacrifice are certainties,' and Theophilus Lindsey is to be reverenced not so much because he was the founder of a chapel, and the upholder of any special opinion, as because he was true to God and conscience, and led an honest and self-sacrificing life.

Meanwhile, there was no firmer supporter of Theophilus Lindsey and his work than Dr. Priestley. When in London, he usually spent Sunday with his friends in Featherstone Buildings, and often preached in Essex Street Chapel. About this time the old name of 'Socinian,' given to this form of belief when it had once before arisen in London, began to give way to that of 'Unitarian.' To both Priestley and Lindsey that new name was dear. It was the badge and banner of the religious freedom they now enjoyed, and stood to them, as far as any name could stand, for the simple religion which Christ taught before it came to be wrapped up in the speculation of succeeding centuries.

Dr. Priestley was a scientific man, and for his discoveries was held in good repute by scientists. He was a theologian, at home in

controversy, and deeply versed in questions of criticism; but above all he was a lover of liberty. He craved for himself and for all God's children personal, political, intellectual, and spiritual freedom—liberty to hear and follow the voice of God, to cast off the mistakes and ignorances of the past, and to grow into ever widening new life and light.

Now while this little germ of religion as taught by Christ (so its upholders believed) was being nurtured into life in the Essex Street auction room, London was excited by news which was stirring all England, for which men watched from day to day in agonies of suspense. Desperate tidings were coming across the Atlantic Ocean from the Colonies in America to the mother-country. Ten years before, these colonies had resisted British schemes for the cancelling of royal charters, by which the Crown had granted them privileges on their first rise in the new country, and had resisted, too, the levying of taxes to lessen the burden of debts incurred by Great Britain through war. This resistance had been successful. But the old dispute had broken out again. The story is well known of the

Boston riot, when the duty on tea was levied by our Parliament; how the English ships which carried the tea cargoes were boarded on their arrival in Boston harbour, and their contents flung into the sea; how the American Congress, stung by the injustice of Great Britain to Massachussetts, prepared to resist by force of arms, levied an army with Washington at its head, and declared war against the mother-country.

Dr. Benjamin Franklin, who some years before had encouraged Joseph Priestley in his early scientific researches, was still ambassador from America to England, and was living in London. Dr. Priestley always remembered with deep gratitude any help that had been given to him in those days when he was working his uphill way, and making his own simple apparatus with little money and limited knowledge. The famous American electrician and the English philosopher were now intimate friends, and Dr. Franklin's anxiety for his country met with warm sympathy both from Dr. Priestley and from his friend, Theophilus Lindsey. When war broke out, Franklin returned to America, but the presence of the

patriot was not needed to keep alive the indignation of the English lovers of liberty. Here was a case, as they conceived, in which England threatened to prevent the free development of her young growing colonies,—their sympathies were all on the side of the infant States. Every step in the struggle was eagerly watched by Dr. Priestley, and every day he wished more earnestly to help forward a spirit of free inquiry and progress that should influence all the concerns of men.

Now Lord Shelburne had no sympathy with these political views held by his librarian. In the House of Lords he voted against a proposal to conciliate the Colonies. Another cause also led to a loss of concord between the two men. Dr. Priestley's liberal theology was out of harmony with the Earl's opinions, and the various pamphlets which he wrote and published now and then met with no favour from Lord Shelburne. Yet though he was well aware of this fact, Dr. Priestley could not hold his peace. Religious interests were dearer to him than any other interests, and he felt constantly impelled to give forth to his fellow-men all fresh gleams of truth that

dawned upon his own mind. So it came to pass that from both causes the breach widened, and in the year 1775 the connection with Lord Shelburne ended. But when this separation took place, Dr. Priestley received a fair annuity. Happily, too, there were men in London, both wise and wealthy, who had learned to know his worth, and seized gladly on the chance to help him with gifts for his scientific experiments and his expenses in publishing.

Nevertheless, after the partial loss of his salary as librarian to the Earl, Dr. Priestley was very poor, and was often anxious about the future of his family. One of his greatest pleasures lay at this time in his intercourse with Theophilus Lindsey; for he made his home in London when he left Calne, and found much interesting work connected with Essex Street Chapel. Dwellers in the narrow streets and squalid courts of the neighbourhood were often cheered by kindly visits from Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey and their friend.

Meanwhile, the congregation meeting in Essex Street grew in numbers and influence Four years from the date when the old auction

room was fitted up and opened, it was found needful to have a more convenient place of worship, and new premises were bought in Essex Street and turned into a chapel and dwelling-house for Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey. Once more in a home of his own, with new chances for influence and work opening ever freshly before him, Theophilus Lindsey looked back over the dark way by which he had been safely led, and thanked God for the faith which had helped him to trust in the sunshine lying behind the clouds.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BIRMINGHAM RIOTS.

IN the year 1780, five years after his parting from Lord Shelburne, Dr. Priestley received an invitation to settle in Birmingham as minister of the 'New Meeting' in Moor Street. Now Birmingham, though historically one of the oldest towns in the kingdom, was wide awake with young, fresh life. Philosophy and politics found a congenial home there, and large numbers of the citizens were watching with keen interest the change in the religious spirit of the age. So the invitation opened welcome prospects before Dr. Priestley, and his London friends who had seen his struggling poverty and his difficulties in educating his children, were very glad of the new chances offered to him.

This settlement in Birmingham promised at first to be the happiest event in his life. In

a little while his home became an intellectual centre. Well-known scientific men gathered round him, among others Dr. Erasmus Darwin, and James Watt, the engineer. He became a member of the Lunar Society. A library filled up with valuable books and manuscripts, and a laboratory containing precious instruments, and the records of his past experiments formed parts of his house. He felt a deep satisfaction in his pulpit work: in the possibility it gave of sharing with sympathetic hearers his freshest and best religious thoughts. It was a full, busy life that he now lead: but Dr. Priestley was no self-engrossed student who only came forth at intervals from his lofty studies to mingle with his fellow men. There were few happier homes in England than his at this period. He was able at any time to think and write while the family life went on around him, and could look up from the pages of his manuscript to talk with his wife or watch his children as they carried on their amusements without fear of disturbing their father's meditations.

Dr. Priestley was a man of warm, ready sympathies. His own troubles had given

him the power of feeling keenly for the hardships and anxieties of others. He was specially attracted to young people. Classes for them formed a principal part of his church work. Even the children, playing in the streets of Birmingham, were so drawn to the gentle, tender-hearted, kindly-faced man, that they were often known to stop their games and try to win a word or smile from him as he passed.

But while he made many firm friends in Birmingham, Dr. Priestley also roused enemies against himself. He was too outspoken to remain unnoticed by those who differed from him, and when pamphlets in defence of Unitarianism followed one another in quick succession from his pen, the orthodox world woke up to criticise and condemn. He wrote a book 'on the history of the corruptions of Christianity,' and the very name was like a fire-brand. Much more the contents. For there were comparatively few people in those days who could bear with him when, in the early part of the book, he unfolded the history of various doctrines held by the Church of England, and showed how they had formed

no part of the actual teaching of Christ: but had grown up and gathered round the gospel tradition in the early centuries following his life on earth. While casting aside dogmas and Church rites that seemed to him only superstitions added on to the simple religion he loved to think was taught by the Master eighteen centuries before, Dr. Priestley was deeply reverent, and wrote and preached what seemed to him the good tidings given to him to declare. Yet many who read were offended, and did not see that at least, if mistaken, he was true to conscience and a devout seeker after God.

The years passed away peacefully in his Birmingham home. His children, a daughter and three sons, grew up and were all that he had fondly hoped they would become. His daughter married and had a happy home at a short distance from Birmingham: his sons, with good prospects before them, were leading useful lives. He and his wife, who was always an invalid needing his tenderest care, were growing into years, and he hoped to end his days in this happy sphere of work.

By this time, the war between England

and America had ended in the independence of the United States. Dr. Priestley was watching with untiring interest the growth of the young nation on the opposite side of the Atlantic Ocean. At home, in England, there were fresh tokens of disquiet wakening anxiety in the mind of every lover of his country. For the political agitations which, history tells us, preceded for so many years the passing of the Reform Bill, had begun to show themselves; discontented, unrepresented people were assembling in public meetings discussions were being held, the agitation was spreading; and newspapers, which were set on foot about this time, focussed the various demands for reform and the protests against it, and thus roused the nation at large to a living interest in the matter. It was held, in certain quarters, that the House of Commons no longer represented the people of England: and from the Nonconformists arose a complaint that they were still most unjustly treated, being deprived of their rights as citizens on the ground of their unorthodox creed. In Birmingham, where liberals and dissenters formed a strong party a cry arose

against the 'Test and Corporation Acts,' which for so many years had shut out all except Churchmen from any civil office. Dr. Priestley, already a marked man, took some part also in this question which affected so deeply the liberties of his fellow-men and he wrote and published a protest addressed to Mr. Pitt, who, early in the year 1787, made his famous speech in the House of Commons against the Repeal of these Acts.

It was at this time that tidings were coming across the Channel of terrible tumults in Paris where, after years of mis-government, the maddened people had risen against their rulers with wild cries for justice and revenge. But the sense of justice was lost in the longing for vengeance and, under pretence of fighting for liberty, the mobs in Paris carried all before them in the most ungoverned licence. Lookers on in England asked each other anxiously how all this would end. Would this reign of terror spread from shore to shore? This was the question raised by men whose tendency it was to look with fear on any change from old established ways. To

such inquirers, Dr. Priestley and thinkers who sympathised with him, seemed ready to become leaders of revolution. Passages from his writings were read in the House of Commons. He was said to be engaged secretly in a plot to destroy Church and State, and set on foot a republic in England. He was declared to be a teacher of atheism as well as sedition, and this cry was taken up in Birmingham where the gentle old philosopher should have been better known. How quickly popular excitement spreads! Before many days were over the town walls were chalked over with curses of Priestley, and the very children who once stopped their play to win a word from him now followed their elders' example and hooted him in the street.

Conscious of his innocence, Dr. Priestley went on his way and trusted that all false reports would die out and leave him at peace with his fellow-citizens. To this end, he was anxious to avoid any act that might waken unjust suspicions or rouse the anger of his opponents, and, when a public dinner was given by the Birmingham Liberals to celebrate the second anniversary of the fall

of the Bastille in Paris, Dr. Priestley, by the advice of his friends, took no part in the proceedings, and spent the day quietly in his house at Sparkbrook, a mile or so out of the town. The welcome news reached him while busy in his usual pursuits that the dinner had passed off without interruption and the town was quiet.

But hardly was the messenger's errand over when there was another tale to tell. With sudden fury, how excited it was never clearly known, a mob had assembled with the party cry of 'King and Church,' and following the command of paid ringleaders from a distance, was filling the streets of Birmingham with tumult and yells. Tories and Churchmen, meaning well, had striven for weeks past to stifle what seemed to them the expression of dangerous views on the part of the lovers of progress and reform. They had roused the passions of ignorant men who were ready to follow the call of any leader, and perhaps it was now beyond their power to curb the monster they had called into life. At all events, no magistrate could be found to quell the disturbance.

While the evening sunlight was still bright and all was calm about the philosopher's house, a chaise drove hurriedly up to the door and bearers of evil tidings told their story breathlessly. The 'New Meeting' was in flames: the rioters, wild with drink and rage, and shouting threats against the dissenters and against Dr. Priestley before all the rest, were wrecking the houses of his congregation as they came along: even now, the distant roar of voices might be heard on the still evening air, and only a few moments remained for escape. There was no chance to save any treasures. Instruments and books, the records of a life's work, all must be forsaken and the household must take refuge in a neighbouring dwelling. There, within hearing of wild huzzas, drunken yells and threatening curses, of battering blows and crash of broken glass the husband and wife spent the next few anxious hours. One of Dr. Priestley's sons in disguise tried with friendly helpers to remove the manuscripts from the library. Cries of 'Stone him' warned them from their attempts. The rioters waded knee-deep in the torn papers which recorded Dr. Priestley's

discoveries, and the precious instruments from his laboratory lay in broken ruins on the lawn. Then rose a cry of fire; flames burst forth, silence followed, and the glare and smoke told Dr. Priestley that his home and all he valued in it were gone for ever. How did he bear the trial and suspense? Calmly pacing up and down, he uttered no hasty word, not even a murmur escaped him—nothing but devout thanks that their lives were spared. The friends who were gathered round him felt a deep reverence for the patience and self-control which raised him in their eyes to a higher eminence than all his talents had ever done.

A new day dawned, but the rage of the mob was not exhausted. Dr. Priestley's refuge was discovered and he must flee again. Across the country to a refuge in his daughter's house—a perilous journey, for the fields and roads were haunted by parties of wild, drunken men, who were searching the country with oaths that they would find the Doctor and take his life. Then on to London where he was kept for some days safely hidden by his anxious friends, where at length,

he had time to breathe and think of the future, and find himself a man of sixty with no prospects and with a delicate wife, broken down by the effects of grief and terror.

Still, his words were all of gratitude that their lives were spared: and still he was resolute and cheerful, and buoyed up with the confidence that all was ordered for the best. And *this* was the man whom some men called an atheist and some feared as a leader of sedition and treason. Yet he was one who truly loved God and man; who asked for liberty to follow the teachings of conscience and reason in religion as well as in the other affairs of life; and who believed that all men, even the unruly destroyers of his home, were capable of perfection and would attain to it in the end. He was one who, though he cast aside some popular beliefs, never lost the deeply reverent soul which is the mark of a lover of the truth.

CHAPTER IX.

AN OLD FRIEND IN NEW SCENES.

CATHERINE HARRISON and her mother found themselves once more without a settled home when the farm was sold. A few months passed before any new plan of life could be made. To Mrs. Harrison, it was of no importance where she lived if her daughter could be with her. To Catherine, the decision must depend on how far the prospect was offered to her of leading a useful life. In course of time it seemed plain that this would be most possible if they took up their abode in York.

In that city two of her father's sisters were living, and they were urgent, as they advanced in years, to have their young niece near them. Moreover, accounts had reached her from time to time of the Grey Coat School, which had been set on foot in York for penniless children. Report told of great mismanagement and of a lack of willing helpers in the work. So, Catherine proposed to her mother that they should take a little house there, and they removed to York in 1782.

The two old ladies built castles in the air concerning their niece's future: but their prophecies of the fashionable life awaiting her, such as they loved themselves, had no weight with her. She knew well that such a heretic as she was would be shunned in the old orthodox Cathedral City, and she had no money to spend on dress or amusements. Besides, the sort of existence they proposed she should lead was removed as far as possible from her wishes. Yet, though their hopes were doomed to disappointment and their airy castles melted, Catherine's aunts found their unfashionable niece with her singular notions a greater blessing in their old age than they had expected she would be. Their days were brightened by her cheerful visits just in the solitary hours when they most needed her. As for Catherine, she was soon constantly busy in her new home. When not wanted by her mother and aunts she visited the Grey Coat School, and planned

reforms for the abuses she found in the management. By degrees, way opened for her to suggest her schemes to the Governors, and they saw the wisdom of her plans and adopted them.

Ever since those early days, when in her visits to Catterick, she had gained new views of life from Theophilus Lindsey's teachings and example, she had found that step by step and little by little, ways of being useful had opened out before her. This was no less the case after her removal to York; one interest after another rose up in the path of this earnest woman who was always on the watch to do any good she could. A large hemp manufactory stood near Mrs. Harrison's house, and great numbers of children were employed there. Catherine used to see them loitering about the streets in their dirty ragged clothes, and grieve over their rough, noisy ways as they came and and went to work. She knew that there was little chance of progress for them under such conditions, and she could not rest satisfied without trying to help them to a better sort of life. But she had no money!

Yet once again, because her will was eager and ready, the way opened before her.

For, among the few people with whom she had become acquainted in York, was a wealthy lady of the name of Grey, who, like Mrs. Edmonson at Lazencroft, grew fond of the enthusiastic, warm-hearted Catherine. Mrs. Grey listened to the tale about the neglected little hemp-pickers, and promised to find money if Catherine would give time and work. It was not very long before a spinning school was established; and thanks to Catherine's former experiences in the benefit club at Stankhouse, and the Grey Coat School in York, the new institution prospered, and the ragged children who were admitted there, had a chance given them to grow up womanly and self-respecting.

Girlhood had passed away by this time and Catherine had entered upon middle life. Her home was a shabby little house in a town—she was very poor, neglected, and probably despised by rich neighbours whose society and attentions she had once longed so heartily to obtain. Yet, though she never sought happiness, she found it continually,

and her life was full of peace and contentment that grew deeper and richer every year. The simple creed she had learned from Theophilus Lindsey, too, grew dearer and more helpful to her, and the Nonconformist Chapel in St. Saviourgate, where the Rev. Newcome Cappe was minister, was her spiritual home each Sunday.

Perhaps it was Mr. Cappe's defence of the persecuted Vicar of Catterick in the year 1774, that had first awakened Catherine's admiration for him. When she went to live in York she found they had many interests in common, and a warm friendship grew up between them. And it came to pass, in course of time, that Mr. Cappe asked her to become his wife. Her sympathies went out warmly to the friend whose home she would have loved to brighten, and whose children needed a mother's watchful care: but Catherine's first thought must be for her mother whom she could not leave alone: her second thought that she had incurred a debt for her brother, and ought to take no fresh responsibilities upon herself while it was still unpaid. So she put away from her

bravely the great prospect of happiness which this marriage seemed to promise her, and continued just as before the cheerful companion to her mother and aunts, and the ever ready helper in all good works.

All this time Catherine was never free from anxiety about her brother, whose broken down state was none the less pitiful because he had wrecked his own fortunes by his weakness and folly. She went from York to see him in his retreat at Long Preston, and found him living in a couple of rooms in the old Vicarage where their happy childhood had been spent. The house was partly in ruins. He and his man-servant occupied the small part of it which still served as a shelter. His curacy lay ten miles away. She wandered round the neglected garden and meadow, and came upon broken palisades and the choked up, stagnant brook, which had once flowed so merrily over the shining pebbles in its bed; a harvest of weeds and desolation everywhere. Nothing remained unchanged but the great Pendle Hill, which had seemed to her childish fancy the guardian of her home, and lay there just as in old days in

the sunny distance with the shadows of the flying clouds chasing each other across its slopes. Some of the 'statesmen' and their wives, whom she had known in her childhood, were still living, and, as her mother's tenants, she had to arrange some business matters with them. In doing so, she met with many a sad experience, but sadder than all was the wreck of the once promising young human life which had begun its course with her in that home so many years before. Catherine never saw her brother alive again. He met with an accident and died before she could reach him.

Frequent letters from Mrs. Lindsey, all most precious and welcome to Catherine, told her, as time passed, about the changing fortunes of her friends. She had visited them in their gloomy lodgings in Featherstone Buildings, when their life in London had only just begun, and month after month had watched in vain for tidings that should tell of brightening prospects and of their self-sacrifice bearing fruit. At last, with what joy did she read of increasing congregations, and then of the opening of the large new

Chapel. Mrs. Lindsey, so proud of her duty-loving husband, recounted to her friend each proof she received of his growing usefulness and influence. Sometimes Catherine began to fear that Mr. Lindsey's health would not be equal to the strain which the press of pulpit and literary work, as well as the demands of his congregation, put upon him. And, indeed, after Dr. Priestley's help was lost, on his removal to Birmingham, this seemed likely to be the case. In 1783, Theophilus Lindsey had been nine years at work in Essex Street, and he was sixty years of age. He felt the need of a colleague and of more time to write down for publication thoughts which he wished to leave behind him when his work on earth was done. So it was good news to Catherine when a letter came from Mrs. Lindsey telling her how Dr. Disney, late Vicar of Swinderby, had been led at last by conscientious scruples to follow Mr. Lindsey's example and give up his living, and how he was coming just at the right time as co-minister at Essex Street Chapel. By and by Catherine was told that welcome tidings were coming from America. The

first episcopal chapel in Boston, following the example set by Theophilus Lindsey's congregation, had adopted a reformed liturgy: and the writings of Dr. Priestley and Mr. Lindsey were being read in the United States, proving helpful to unsettled inquirers and rousing the churches to new religious life. Thus letter after letter gave promise of a ripening harvest to the seed Theophilus Lindsey had sown: and where in truth does the influence ever end of one who has turned from what is worldly wise and safe to do that which he knows is simply right and true?

Mrs. Lindsey, on her side, welcomed with equal pleasure the letters she received from York. Six years after Mrs. Harrison and her daughter settled there, Catherine wrote to tell her friend of her intended marriage. Circumstances had changed; all difficulties were removed; an unexpected legacy had helped Catherine to repay the debt incurred for her brother, and a plan had presented itself which insured comfort and companionship for Mrs. Harrison. So, in course of time, to her mother's great satisfaction, Catherine entered on her new life, and joy-

fully welcomed the fresh duties and interests it brought with it. There were various responsibilities to be met. Mr. Cappe had of late had slight threatenings of paralysis, and his health needed care. His three eldest children were grown up, and Catherine knew that great tact would be required on her part to rightly fill her new position towards them. But her loving nature and ready sympathy worked wonders. Very soon her husband's children became to her like her own. No detail of the many duties that fell to her escaped her watchful care, and she found welcome work outside the home in her husband's congregation. Her letters for some time after her marriage seemed to Mrs. Lindsey to tell of settled happiness. Then clouds came. One of her step-sons, a youth of great promise, died; and Mr. Cappe's ill health increased. Soon, so great was the change in his condition, Catherine was compelled to withdraw her attention as far as possible from external matters, that she might devote herself more closely to his comfort and requirements.

A few months before her marriage, Catherine

had established, with Mrs. Grey's help, a Female Benefit Club, on the plan of the Club she had formerly set on foot among the colliers' wives living near Stankhouse Farm. Her increasing home-claims interfered more and more with her visits to this Club and to the Spinning School, but she was still the soul of all that went on in both Institutions, her advice was constantly needed and she paid visits to them whenever she had opportunity.

One spring morning, Mr. Cappe rode out into the country to baptize a child and did not expect to be back again till afternoon. Catherine was feeling anxious about him, for he had been less well than usual the day before ; and it was with a heavy heart that she set forth to spend some hours of his absence at the Benefit Club. On her return home, she watched and waited in great suspense, listening for the sound of his horse's hoofs upon the road. Again and again she hurried out only to be disappointed. At last, a neighbour presenting himself unexpectedly told her, by his face and manner, that he was a bringer of bad news. Before his first

sentences were spoken a chaise drove up and in it lay her husband helpless and speechless. The long threatened paralytic seizure had visited him at last, and he had fallen from his horse in a country lane on his way home.

If her friends feared for Catherine in this great trouble, they soon discovered their mistake. The stores of faith and patience she had garnered up in the store-house of character for years past, answered to the claims made upon them in this new trial and gave her strength for all she had to bear. For some weeks Mr. Cappe lay between life and death. Catherine and her step-daughters nursed him back to life. Then the doctors told her that all active work was over for him and that he would never preach again. In this trouble no human being could help her. She kept the sad knowledge to herself, and no word or look from her clouded the hope of recovery which cheered her husband. Connected with his long illness came money troubles, family anxieties which he had no strength to share in, and arrangements to be made for the welfare of Church and congregation. The storm blew from many quarters

at once: but Catherine bravely and cheerfully shielded him and bore the brunt herself, looking back thankfully on the lessons learned at Catterick, and the trials of her life at Stankhouse which had prepared her for the present conflicts. And all the time she never lost her faith that the sunshine would return.

By slow degrees the altered life shaped itself, and some amount of the old accustomed ways could be pursued. Mr. Cappe regained his speech, and with Catherine's help, took up again some of his literary work. The patient wife wrote at her husband's dictation for many hours every day, feeling it no trial because of the love she bore him, to surrender her own individual tastes and withdraw from the interests that had formed so prominent a part of her own life. One great source of satisfaction was the settlement in York of a young minister to take Mr. Cappe's pulpit duty, only a temporary arrangement as the invalid continued to believe, but giving him the greatest gratification: for the Rev. Charles Wellbeloved was like a son to the old minister and even in those early days he gave promise of his future ability and talent.

Happy was Catherine, devoted entirely to nursing and cheering her husband, when twelve months after the loss of power which at one time threatened to make life a burden to him, he said to her, 'I am now surrounded with blessings.' She needed no other reward, for she had found the real spring of happiness and 'in blessing others was herself most blest.'

CHAPTER X.

CLOSING YEARS.

FOR five days and nights the rioters' rallying cry of 'Church and King' echoed through the streets of Birmingham. The vain search for Dr. Priestley went on, and the wild rage of the mob against the dissenting liberals never flagged till the arrival of a strong body of troops brought order into the town. By that time £60,000 worth of property had been destroyed, gaping spaces and heaps of smouldering ruins were to be seen on all sides, and the charred bodies of drunken rioters lay in the cellars of the houses they had destroyed. When tranquility was restored, the scattered inhabitants, who had fled for safety, ventured back into the town to begin the sad work of rebuilding their houses. But for Dr. Priestley the dear old home and work in Birmingham could never be restored. His

cheerful courage, which amazed his London friends, seemed to predict better days to come; and we, who read his story in these later years, may pass over the weary interval of suspense and see him settled at Clapton, near London, beginning a new life there with hope and gratitude.

For the congregation of the chapel at Hackney, a mile or so from Clapton, across the Common, had invited Dr. Priestley to fill the post of minister then vacant, and he had accepted the invitation. Then the dear old intercourse with Theophilus Lindsey was continued, and a new friend, the Rev. Thomas Belsham, theological tutor at the new Hackney College, was added to this little circle. Of his former story something must now be told.

In 1779, the year after the opening of the new chapel in Essex Street, Mr. Belsham, then tutor at Daventry Academy (where Dr. Priestley had studied in his youth), came to London on a visit. One Sunday evening, he went with some friends to hear Theophilus Lindsey preach. The subject of the sermon was 'A good conscience'; and when service was over, as he left the chapel, Mr. Belsham

said to his companions, 'I am confirmed in the opinion that it is possible for a Socinian to be a good man.'

After this, his attention, already drawn to Mr. Lindsey by the sermon he had heard, and by the story of the resignation of the Catterick living, was further attracted to the Unitarian controversy which had been awakened by the writings of Mr. Lindsey and Dr. Priestley. Then the orthodox but broad-minded tutor determined to write a new course of lectures for the students at Daventry, in which he would examine, and, as he believed, show good reason for discarding the Unitarian doctrines.

So Mr. Belsham investigated texts and authorities and commentators, both orthodox and Unitarian, and, according to the custom at Daventry Academy, he laid the results before his pupils for their own consideration. The unexpected consequence was a change in his own views. He declared himself a Unitarian, and gave up his post at Daventry.

Now it happened that a new theological college had just been opened at Hackney. This college was entirely unfettered by subscription to a creed, as Warrington Academy,

which was by this time closed, had been. After a little demur on the part of some of the governors, Mr. Belsham was chosen as theological tutor; thus a way opened for his introduction to Dr. Priestley, and also to the minister of Essex Street Chapel. There were differences of opinion among the three men, all being deep thinkers and earnest students; but these diversities gave an added charm to their intercourse. They all believed in the right of free inquiry, and behind all their varying views lay a deep reverence for truth in all its aspects, and a readiness in each mind to become a learner.

Dr. Priestley was soon hard at work. He gave free lectures on chemistry and history at Hackney College; held classes for the young people of his congregation: and studied and preached and wrote as he had done in Birmingham. By degrees, the terrible losses he had suffered were partially made good (they could never be wholly recovered). Friends sent presents of books, patrons of science presented instruments, and a new library and laboratory grew up about him. Addresses of sympathy were forwarded to him from different

must be a blank to him for some time when he was deprived of the companionship of his dear old friend.

Honours and friendly welcomes awaited him in the United States. In New York, he was invited to remain and open a Unitarian Church: in Philadelphia, the post of professor of chemistry in the University was pressed upon him. But his harassed wife longed for country life and quiet, and for her sake, chiefly, he declined both offers. His sons were farming near Northumberland, a little town on a branch of the river Susquehanna, and he made his home in their neighbourhood. A letter from one English friend to another thus bewailed Dr. Priestley's self-exile:—'He will be buried with nobody to teach, no means of continuing his philosophical pursuits, no means of repairing the breaches in his apparatus, to set his furnaces, &c. He can only sleep and sail about. He might, indeed, think, but he cannot print. A few years will doubtless bring artificers, but every year after threescore takes away vigour and the power of exertion. If Mrs. Priestley and his son are determined to stay, he yields certainly to what appears

best for them, and he is so humble-minded that he will think the work he loves best, making converts to the Divine Unity, will be done by other instruments.'

Dr. Priestley lived nine years at Northumberland, and proved this gloomy prediction a mistaken one. For a brave man thrives on difficulties, and out of adversities and trials he carves out a useful life. At first, no doubt, the breaking of an instrument, the lack of good workmen, and the difficulty of transit to the little settlement in the wilderness, caused wearisome delays in his experiments; but the town grew larger every year, and he had a great store of patience which helped him not only to labour but to wait. His diary tells of the regular and amazing amount of reading he accomplished, and of the great number of his writings—a church history, and theological and scientific treatises among the rest,—which the continued generosity of his English friends helped him to publish. On two or three occasions he gave courses of lectures, and preached in Philadelphia. Each time crowded audiences assembled to hear him. As time passed, some of the wisest and best men of

America sought him out in his country home or corresponded with him; and it was a satisfaction to him also to watch the gradual spread of his religious opinions, and to find the value of his scientific discoveries acknowledged in the United States. He was always a man of simple tastes, and self-helpful; rising early and lighting his own study fire; working in his garden, and finding the keenest pleasure in the views over the broad river and the hills that lay beyond. Each Sunday, he held a service, at first in his own house, later in a neighbouring schoolhouse, for the few inhabitants of the country town who cared to attend. At all times he guarded his invalid wife tenderly, and was never too busy to welcome the little grandchildren, who looked upon the old philosopher as their own especial companion, and on his laboratory and study as their favorite haunts. Two great sorrows visited him, in the death of his wife, and afterwards of his youngest son, on whom, as his successor in his scientific work, his hopes were fixed. But he bore both losses with the resignation and courage he had always shown, and the loving care of his remaining sons and their families cheered his

closing years. He valued greatly his correspondence with English friends, especially with Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey, and his thoughts always went out lovingly towards England, with no bitter memory of the wrongs he had suffered there. Indeed, for a long time, he kept in view the hope of returning to his native land. But this was not to be.

The year before his old friend's departure to America, Theophilus Lindsey had showed signs of failing strength, and on this account Dr. Disney had taken the sole charge at Essex Street Chapel. Still, Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey continued to live at Essex House; and though his bodily power declined, yet through his letters and conversation with the number of people who sought his advice, Mr. Lindsey's life remained rich and full of interest. A sunny old age seemed to await him. It was no small happiness to have the power (for he was in easy circumstances now) to help those who were in need, as he had been able to do in the old days at Catterick. Another great joy came from the renewal of broken friendship, for the flight of years had softened the anger some of his old friends had felt towards him.

There were country houses where, in the summer, no guests were more honoured and welcome than were Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey. There he could carry on his literary work, and both together could recal the old delights of their rambles in the meadows at Catterick, and in the garden at Richmond where they had first met. At length they returned to Richmond for a visit, and spent some days on their way home in York, with Mrs. Cappe, whose life was then devoted to the care of her invalid husband. Mrs. Lindsey had written beforehand, 'We will take a personal leave of our dearest friends in the north, for we shall never return again.' And this was a true prophecy. For a sudden loss of power visited Mr. Lindsey in the spring of 1801. It was followed in a few months by a severe stroke of paralysis. The sad news was sent to Dr. Priestley; and from that time the letters to him were all written by Mrs. Lindsey, sometimes with her husband's trembling signature attached, but always brightened with the invalid's affectionate messages and anticipations of meeting in a better world.

The summons thither came first to Dr.

Priestley. In one of his visits to Philadelphia he had a serious illness. Similar attacks followed at intervals, and his children watching him anxiously grieved to see that, silently and uncomplainingly, he was compelled to make little changes in his mode of life, and to give up some of his accustomed ways. By and by he no longer worked in his garden, then he gave up his pursuits in his laboratory. But still he composed quickly and with ease, and his cheerful letters to Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey (continued to within a fortnight of his death) gave no sign that the body was slowly but surely wearing out, for the spirit was still bright and clear.

But letters from his sons told at last how the old man had suddenly passed away, working to the end. They told how among his latest words he had spoken lovingly of his English friends, how he had given thanks for all the work and happiness of his past life, and how brightly he had spoken of the heavenly life in which all would meet again. On the morning of the 6th of February, 1804, he had found strength to dictate the last words in the

pamphlet which it had been his great wish to finish before he died. And then, with his dear ones round him, he murmured 'That is right, I have now done,' and peacefully passed away.

How glad his old friend in England would have been, could he have known that seventy years later a statue to Dr. Priestley would be unveiled in Birmingham, and that Englishmen would at last do honour to his patient and persevering scientific work. Yet, though he could not be gratified by this knowledge, Theophilus Lindsey's last years were cheered with the hope that freedom for religious opinions, in support of which both he and Dr. Priestley had laboured, was gaining ground, and that honesty in thought and speech would have a chance of leavening more and more in coming years the intercourse of man.

Theophilus Lindsey outlived Dr. Priestley five years. Blessed with his wife's care and companionship to the last, he bore with the utmost patience the gradual decay of his physical powers. To the last, too, his interest in Essex Street Chapel never failed. Another

change had taken place there. Mr. Belsham had succeeded Dr. Disney in 1805, as sole minister, and he found, as his predecessor had done, that counsel and sympathy were always ready for him when he sought them at Essex House. But it became more and more uncommon to see the venerable form of its founder in the chapel, and to his friends it was evident that Theophilus Lindsey was failing fast. Mrs. Cappe found comfort, after her husband's death, in ministering at intervals to Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey. She was with them on the old man's eighty-third birthday, and they talked together of days and scenes which seemed in the retrospect 'like a troubled sea long passed in safety.' Cheerful and patient, under increasing infirmities, to the last, he died on November 3rd, 1808, with the words 'God's will is best' upon his lips. A large concourse of mourners gathered round his grave-side in Bunhill Fields, and the following Sunday, when Mr. Belsham preached his funeral sermon, Essex Street Chapel was filled to overflowing by listeners, deeply affected by his death.

It was fitly said of Theophilus Lindsey, by

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