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A MEMOIR OF MR. GEORGE SHADFORD
Compiled by Duane V. Maxey

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The Biography Section:
January -- Pages 11-14
February -- Pages 52-57
March -- Pages 90-95
April -- Pages 136-141
May -- 169-175

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MUCH MORE IN THE HDM DIGITAL LIBRARY ABOUT GEORGE SHADFORD

George Shadford was mightily used of God as one of John Wesley's missionaries to America. His life story is worthy of the time taken to study it. In addition to this Memoir, the HDM Digital Library contains much more about him. Every reference to George Shadford on the HDM CD may be found by using the Search & Replace utility.

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PART 1 -- FROM THE JANUARY, 1818 ISSUE

Mr. George Shadford, the subject of this Memoir, was born at a place called Scotter, new Kirton, in Lindsey, Lincolnshire, January 19, 1739. When no more than about eight or nine years of age, the fear of death, and the consideration of the future misery of those who die in their sins, distressed him exceedingly. But as he grow up, to use his own words, he "was very prone to speak bad words, and often to perform wicked actions." Being of in active and restless disposition, he sought for happiness in the use of a variety of spots and diversions, some of which were of a cruel nature.

On every Lord's day, in the forenoon, his father took him to church, and after their return home obliged him and his sister to read a chapter or two of the Scriptures, and then charged him not to play in the afternoon; but, notwithstanding the positive injunction of his father, he took the first opportunity that presented itself to steal away to his sports, nor was it unusual for him, on such occasions, to stay from home till evening, when, he says, his father called him to an account.

From the occasional hints, relative to his parents, which are found in Mr. Shadford's account of himself, it my be concluded that they feared God, and wrought righteousness. They insisted on his praying every morning and evening at least; sent him every Sunday to be catechized by the minister; and when he was fourteen, sent him to the bishop to be confirmed. When he was sixteen years of age, they gave him a charge to prepare for receiving the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

For about a month before he partook of this sacred ordinance, he retired from all vain and trifling company, and prayed and read much alone; while the Spirit of God applied to his heart the Divine truths which he read. He wept much in secret, was ashamed of his past life, and hoped that he would never again profane the Day of the Lord. When he approached the table of the Lord, it appeared so awful to him, that he could scarcely stand; and affected him in some measure, as if he had been going to the judgment-seat of Christ. His heart, upon this solemn occasion, was softened; and the impressions then made upon his mind continued to operate for about three months. He broke off from all his companions, and retired so read on the Lord's day; sometimes into his

chamber, at other times, into the field; but very frequently into the church-yard, near which his father lived. Occasionally, he spent no less than two or three hours among the graves, sometimes reading and sometimes praying. Nor was he, at those seasons, altogether destitute of Divine comfort: and it is highly probable, that had he then been favored with the advantage of Christian fellowship, he would have retained the Divine impressions made upon his mind, and proceeded steadily in the way of holiness. But alas! he had not a single companion that feared God; and hence, having none to direct him, and being ignorant of Satan's devices, he yielded gradually to one temptation after another, until he lost the form of godliness as well as the degree of the power of it, which he had for a time possessed.

Thus shorn of his strength, he was easily prevailed upon by two young men, with whom he became intimate to read such books, and converse upon such subjects, as had a powerful tendency to vitiate his mind. His relish for profane books was, of course, followed by a dislike to those of a religious description; and his propensity to sin increased more than ever. In wrestling, running, leaping, football, dancing, and such like sports, he not only delighted, but gloried. At the age of twenty he was so active that he seemed a compound of life and fire, and had such a flow of animal spirits, that he was never in his element unless when employed in such sports.

About this time four persons were balloted to serve in the militia, at the town of his nativity; and he engaged, for a trifling sum, to become a substitute to one of them. His parents, on being made acquainted with the rash step he had taken, were almost distracted with grief. The distress which they manifested gave him much uneasiness, and, at their desire, he attempted, but when it was too late, to break the engagement into which he had entered.

At the end of the year, the company was called off to Manchester, where they lay most of the winter. While in that place, Mr. Shadford was afflicted with a fever, during the progress of which he was horribly afraid of death; but soon after his recovery his convictions wore off. One night, when he was going to bed, he heard the drums beat to arms! He soon learned that an express had arrived for the company to which he belonged to march immediately to Liverpool; and that Thurot had landed at Carrickfergus, in Ireland. The company immediately assembled. They marched all night, and arrived at Warrington about break of day, and at Liverpool the next evening. It does not, however, appear that the company embarked for Ireland, Thurot's putting into Carrickfergus having been found to be a matter of no serious consequence.

Misery being inseparable from sin, Mr. Shadford found, from experience, that "the way of transgressor is hard." One day, being exceedingly provoked by one of his comrades, he twice swore by the name of God; a crime of which he had not formerly been guilty. "Immediately," said he, "I was, as it were, stabbed to the heart by a sword. I was sensible I had grievously sinned against God. I believe I never swore another oath afterwards."

About this time he was often tempted to put an end to his wretched, mortal life. So powerfully did this temptation operate, that he was afraid to stand near a deep river, lest he should throw himself into it. When on the edge of a rock, he trembled, and fearing lest he should cast himself down, was obliged to retreat suddenly. When on the front of a gallery, at church, he many times drew backward, from an apprehension that otherwise he should east himself down headlong. It seemed as if Satan was permitted to wreak his malice upon him in an uncommon manner; but he

was wonderfully preserved amidst such dreadful temptations. At other times, when at prayer, or walking alone meditating, God graciously visited him with the drawings of his Spirit.

Amidst all Mr. Shadford's wanderings from God, he still retained a strong affection for his parents; and hence, learning that his father was in distressing circumstances, he gave him all the money he had received in order to go into the militia. Very frequently, during his absence from home, when he heard the minister read in the church, "Honour thy father and thy mother;" &c., with tears in his eyes, he said, "Lord incline my heart to keep this law:" always believing that a curse would attend undutiful children.

When the company to which he belonged lay in Gainsborough he went with a sergeant to the place where the Methodists frequently preached. Their intention in going there was not to receive profit to their souls, but to meet two young women, in order to walk with them in the afternoon. When they came to the place, they found the persons whom they wished to meet; but shortly after the preacher began, Mr. Shadford forgot those dissipated characters. "I was struck," saith he, "with his (the preacher's) manner. He took out a hymn-book, and the people sung a hymn. After this, he began to pray extempore, in such a manner as I had never heard. I thought it a most excellent prayer. After this, he took his little Bible out of his pocket, read over his text, and put it into his pocket again. I marveled at this, and thought within myself 'will he preach without a book too?'"

The preacher spoke much against drunkenness, swearing, &c., but Mr. Shadford thought he had not been guilty of such sins. At last he spoke very close against pleasure-takers, and proved that such are dead while they live. "I thought," saith Mr. Shadford, "if what he says be true, I am in a dreadful condition. I thought again, this must be true, for he proves it from the word of God. Immediately found a kind of judgment-seat set up in my conscience, where I was tried, cast, and condemned; for I knew I had been seeking happiness in the pleasures of the world, and in the creature all my days; not in the Creator and Redeemer of my soul, the only central Point of bliss. I revolved over and over what I had heard, as I went from preaching: and resolved, 'if this be Methodist preaching, I will come again;' for I received more light from that single sermon than from all that ever I had heard in my life before."

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PART 2 -- FROM THE FEBRUARY, 1818 ISSUE

After this, he went every Sunday, when there was preaching, at half-past one, to the same place, and continued to do so most of the time that he remained at Gainsborough. It was not long before his comrades and acquaintance took notice of his religious turn of mind, and began to ridicule him. As this he was surprised, having ignorantly imagined, that if he became serious, every one would love and esteem him. He continued to attend the preaching, "till," said he, "the soldiers and others having repeatedly reproached me, and laughed at me, began to think I had not sufficient strength to travel to heaven, as I was connected with such a set of sinners. I then made a vow to Almighty God, that if he would spare me until that time twelvemonth, (at which time, I should be delivered from the militia, and intended to return home,) I would then serve him. So I resolved to venture another year in the old way, damned or saved. O! what a mercy, that I am not

in hell! -- that God did not take me at my word, and cut me off immediately! From this time the Spirit of God was grieved, and, consequently, I was left to fall into sin as bad, or worse than ever."

From Gainsborough the company to which Mr. Shadford belonged removed to Dartford, where they remained a few weeks. It was then (what ever it may be at present,) noted for swearing, drunkenness, Sabbath breaking, &c. "It was at this place," saith Mr. Shadford "the Lord arrested me again with strong convictions; so that I was obliged to leave my comrades at noon day, and run up into my chamber, where I threw myself upon my knees and wept bitterly. I was ready to tear the hair from my head, thinking I must perish at last."

While he was engaged in prayer, the landlady of the inn came up into his chamber, and found him upon his knees. The realities of the eternal world had so occupied his mind, as to prevent him from being ashamed. At that time, she said nothing to him, but at night she took him to task, and asked him whether he was a Wesleyan or a Whitefieldite? He said, "Madam, what do you mean? Do you reproach me because I pray?" She paused. He then said, "Madam do you never pray to God? I think I never saw you at church, or any place of worship, these ten weeks I have been at your house." She answered, "No, the parson and I have quarreled, and therefore, I do not choose to hear him." A poor excuse, Madam," he replied, "and will you also quarrel with God?" Wherever he traveled, he found that the Methodists were spoken against by wicked and ungodly persons of every denomination; and the more he searched the Scriptures, he was the more fully persuaded that they were a people truly devoted to God.

After the company to which Mr. Shadford belonged had marched to, and remained for some time at Dover, Gainsborough, and Epworth, he obtained his discharge. Released from a mode of life, in which it appears he never delighted, he returned to his father's house. Shortly after his arrival, several young persons proposed a dance, in order to express their joy at his return. Against this mode of rejoicing his conscience strongly remonstrated, but in vain; for he joined the careless assembly, which continued their merriment until break of day. But he soon found, to his sorrow, that anguish and distress tread upon the heels of sinful pleasure.

Returning from the tavern to his father's house, his conscience led him to inquire, "What have I been doing this night, serving the devil!" He then considered the misery which he had endured in a course of rebellion against God, and justly concluded, that it costs a man more to lose than to save his soul. A few moments after he had drawn this conclusion, it seemed to him as if something had spoken to his heart, "Remember thy promise;" and immediately it occurred to his mind, that it was a year since he had thus promised to the Lord, "If Thou wilt spare me until I get home; I will serve Thee." Then that passage in Ecclesiastes came into his mind, "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it, for he hath no pleasure in fools; pay that thou owest." Immediately he resolved that he would serve the devil no longer.

On his forming this resolution, it was suggested to his mind, "Stay another year, until you are married and settled in the world, and then thou mayst be religious." That suggestion was immediately followed by a persuasion, that if he yielded to it, God would cut him off, and send him to hell. From that time he relinquished dancing and began to seek happiness in God.

The resolution which he then formed to devote himself unreservedly to his service was considerably strengthened by the following circumstance. Before he went into the militia, he had been in some measure engaged to a young woman that lived in Nottinghamshire; and when he was at Manchester, he wrote to her, but, to his surprise, received no answer. After he returned home, he went to see her, but found she was dead and buried. He requested a friend to show him where she was buried; and, on coming to it, he saw a new stone with this inscription:

"In bloom of youth into this town I came,
Reader, repent; thy lot may be the same."

The sight of this stone so affected him, that he wept much. He learned that it belonged to a young woman, aged twenty-one, who had made great preparations in gay clothing, in order to have what she called a good dance at the approaching fair. Before the time came, she talked much of the pleasure she expected. The wished for period at last arrived; and, at twelve o'clock at night, she was suddenly taken ill in the midst of her dancing companions. She was put to bed immediately, from which she rose no more. Meditating on the death of those two young women, Mr. Shadford's mind was deeply affected. Well! thought he, a little while ago these were talking, walking pieces of clay, like myself; but they have gone to the house appointed for all living. He wept, and turned his back to the place. The impressions made upon his mind, on that affecting occasion, were not erased till the day of his conversion to God.

About this time both his parents were taken so ill, that he greatly feared they would not recover. One day, while greatly distressed on their account, and not knowing what to do; it was strongly impressed upon his mind, "Go to prayer for them."

"I went up stairs," saith he, "shut myself in, and, if ever I prayed in my life from my heart I did it at this time. I remember, in particular, that I prayed to the Lord, to raise them up again, and spare them four or five years longer. This prayer, he graciously condescended both to hear and answer; for the one lived about four, the other near five years afterward, and was truly converted to God."

While Mr. Shadford was from home in the militia, a farmer, who was a Methodist, came to reside at the place of his nativity; he received the Methodist Preachers, and a little society had been formed. "I was now," saith Mr. Shadford "to seek happiness in God, and therefore, went constantly to church and sacrament, and to hear the Methodist preachers; to pray, and read the Scriptures. I thought I will be good. I am determined to be good; but alas! in about six or eight weeks, instead of being very good, I saw my heart was nothing but sin. I read at night different prayers. Sometimes I prayed for humility or meekness; at other times for faith, patience, or chastity; whatever I thought I wanted most. I was thus employed, when the family were in bed, for hours together. And many times while reading, the tears ran from my eyes, so that I could read no further; and when I found my heart softened, and could open it to Almighty God, there seemed a secret pleasure in repentance itself; with an hope springing up, that God would save me, and bestow his pardoning mercy. While I was thus employed in seeking the Lord, and drawn by the Spirit of God, I esteemed it more than my necessary food."

The remark made by Mr. Shadford that there is a secret pleasure in repentance itself, is founded in truth; and hence a real penitent, groaning for redemption in the blood of Christ, would not exchange his godly sorrow for all the wealth and pleasures the world can afford. The God of all grace generally mixes with the bitter cup of repentance some drops of consolation, that those who drink of it may not sink into the horrors of despair. All, it is true, do not, previous to their being justified, drink equally of the cup of sorrow; the hearts of some of them being gently opened to receive the King of Glory: but they are all thoroughly humbled: brought to part with all their sins; and give up every idea of being saved otherwise than merely by grace, through faith. We shall shortly see, that Mr. Shadford, after striving for a time to be justified by the deeds of the law, was brought to accept of pardon as freely offered in the Gospel.

Some time before he obtained a sense of his acceptance "in the Beloved," being at the house of an uncle of his, at East Ferry, his uncle asked him if the latter part of the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans was descriptive of St. Paul in his converted state? He replied that he could not tell and added, that if it described St. Paul's converted state, it exactly suited his. He then began to flatter himself that he was in a safe state from a consideration, that "the good he would, he did not;" and that "the evil he would not, that he did." But the Lord did not suffer him to remain, for any length of time, under the power of this dangerous delusion, which has, it is to be feared, been destructive to thousands.

That delusion being vanished, "I had," saith he, "sorrow and deep distress. My sins pressed me sore, and the hand of the Lord was heavy upon me. Thus I continued until Sunday the 5th of May, 1762: coming out of church, the farmer that received the preachers, told me a stranger was to preach at his house. I went to hear him, and was pleased and much affected. He gave notice that he would preach again in the evening. In the mean time, I persuaded as many of my neighbors as I, could to go. We had a full house, and several were greatly affected while he published his crucified Master. Toward the latter part of the sermon, I trembled; I shook; I wept. I thought, 'I cannot stand it, I shall fall down among the people.' Oh! how gladly would I have been alone to weep, for I was tempted with shame.

"I well remember he called out at last, and said, 'Is there any young man here, about my age, willing to give up all and come to Christ? Let him come and welcome, for all things are now ready.' I thought, before this, he was preaching to me; but now I was sure he spoke to me in particular. I stood, guilty and condemned, like the publican in the temple. I cried out, so that others might hear, being pierced to the heart by the sword of the Spirit, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'

No sooner had I expressed these words, than by the eye of faith, (not with my bodily eyes,) I saw Christ, my Advocate, at the right hand of God, making intercession for me. In an instant, the Lord filled my soul with divine love, as quick as lightning: so suddenly did the Lord, whom I sought, come to his temple. Immediately my eyes flowed with tears, and my heart with love. I sat down in a chair, for I could stand no longer. And these words ran through my mind twenty times over, 'Marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.' I knew not then that these words were in the Scripture, until I opened upon them in the Psalms when I got home."

Having drunk deeply of the wormwood and gall of distress formerly, he now drank as plentifully of the living streams of Divine consolation. When he read his Bible, so clearly did he

understand many parts of it, of which he could form no idea before, that it appeared to him a new book. When he meditated on God and Christ, angels or spirits; when he considered good or bad men, any or all the creatures that surrounded him, they appeared not only new to him, but to stand in a different relation to him to what they had formerly done.

At night he retired to his rest in peace, and with a thankful heart, because the Lord had redeemed him, and given him that peace which passeth all understanding. He thought that he should never more be troubled with the sin which had most easily beset him; and said within himself, "the enemies I have seen this day, I shall see them no more forever." But no sooner had he experienced inward peace, than the devil and wicked men began to molest him. "And no marvel," saith he, "for the devil had lost one of the main pillars of his kingdom in that parish. And therefore he did not leave one stone unturned, that he might cast an odium upon the work of God in that place. But none of these things moved me, for I was happy, happy in God; clothed with the sun, and the moon under my feet; raised up, and made to sit in heavenly; holy, happy places in Christ Jesus."

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PART 3 -- FROM THE MARCH, 1818 ISSUE

In a fortnight after his soul had been made happy in God, he joined the little society, consisting of twelve members, chiefly old people, in the place where he resided. The description of persons with whom he began to meet was not quite agreeable to him; "but," saith he, "I thought it my duty to cast in my lot among them; for I was certain the Methodists (under God) were the happy instruments of my salvation." At this time, like a true follower of the Lord Jesus, while he earnestly desired the conversion of the whole world, the salvation of those who were near to him by the ties of nature excited his greatest solicitude. He had a father and mother, sister and brother, all without a saving acquaintance with God. His father was near sixty years, and his mother not far from that age. Seldom did he approach God in prayer, without sincerely and earnestly supplicating him in their behalf; and, in the performance of this duty, he experienced much encouragement.

One night, he took the liberty of speaking to his parents, in as humble a manner as possible, on the subject of family prayer. He told them that he believed they had brought up him and his brother and sister in the fear of God, according to the best of their knowledge; but added, that hitherto they had not had prayer in the family. Finding that these observations were not resented by his parents, he proposed to go to prayer with them. On their consenting, they went into another room. He had not spoken many words before they were both in tears. When they arose from prayer, they wept over each other; but what seemed to affect Mr. Shadford's parents most was, that they were taught by their own child, whom they ought to have instructed.

"I continued," saith Mr. Shadford, "to pray for them every night and morning for half-a-year. My father at length began to be in deep distress. I listened, and heard him in private crying for mercy, like David, out of the horrible pit, and mire and clay, 'O Lord, deliver my soul.' I began to reprove, exhort, and warn others wherever I came. My father was sometimes afraid, if I reproved the customers who came to our shop, it would give offense, and we should lose all our business. Upon which, I said, 'Father, let us trust God for once with all our concerns, and let us do this in the way of our duty, from a right principle, and if he deceives us, we will trust him no more;

for none ever trusted the Lord and were confounded.' In less than a twelvemonth, instead of losing, we had more business than we ever had before."

About this time, Mr. Shadford began to pray in all the public and private religious meetings. which he attended; and several, through the instrumentality of his exertions, were savingly brought to God, before he attempted, in a regular way, either to exhort or preach. At that period, he had no idea of being a preacher; but simply aimed at doing all the good in his power. The love of God burning in his heart constrained him to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come, and to speak of the unsearchable riches of Christ. In a short time, the society to which he belonged increased from twelve to forty members; and the Lord gave him several who had been his companions in sin, to be his fellow travelers in the way of holiness.

The first time he exhorted was in the Society. The class leader put a hymn-book into his hand and requested him to give a word of exhortation. On his receiving the book he trembled; but instantly his soul was filled with the love of God, and his fear departed. There is reason to believe that the few words which he spoke on that occasion were made a blessing to every one present. An old man, one of the first converts in the town, advised him to give himself up to much reading and prayer, from a persuasion, that God intended to make him useful in the Church.

One Sunday morning while he was exhorting in the farmer's house, his father was cut to the heart by means of some expression which he used. He fell back into the chair by which he stood, and wept, and was greatly distressed. On the evening of the same day, he said, "I know not what is the matter with me; I seem stupid and foolish; nay, I seem lost." Mr. Shadford replied, "Then you will not be long before you are found. Father, you are not far from the kingdom of God. Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost."

"The next day," saith Mr. Shadford, "I came into the room where he (his father) was sitting with a Bible on his knee. He was reading in the Psalms of David. I saw the tears running down his cheeks; yet there appeared a joy in his countenance. I said, 'Pray, father, what now? what is the matter?' He instantly answered, 'I have found Christ at last. Upwards of sixty years I have lived without him in the world, in sin and ignorance. I have been all the day idle and entered not into his vineyard till the eleventh hour. O! how merciful was he to spare, and hire me at last: he hath set my soul at liberty. O! Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name.' I left him rejoicing in God his Saviour, and retired to praise God for answering my prayers."

Mr. Shadford's mother was convinced of sin, by means of overhearing him and an old man conversing in private on the subject of their Christian experience. She had been strictly moral, had feared God, and conscientiously endeavored to serve him, according to the degree of knowledge she possessed. But, notwithstanding her former regularity of conduct, when she was thoroughly awakened, her distress of mind so affected her body, upon several occasions, that she was like a person convulsed. After some time, under a sermon preached by Mr. Samuel Meggitt, God set her soul at liberty, shed his love abroad in her heart, and enabled her to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

About this time, Mr. Shadford visited his sister, near Epworth, in order to inform her what God had done for his soul. When he began to converse on the subject of inward religion, she imagined he was beside himself; but at length she listened to him with seriousness and attention. After he had returned home, she began to revolve in her mind what he had said to her; and thought, "How can my brother have any view to deceive me? What interest can he have in so doing? Certainly, my state is worse than I imagine; he sees my state, and I do not. Besides, he seems to be another man, for he does not look, or speak, or act as he used to do. So powerfully did the amazing change which she observed in her brother, together with the pious instructions which he gave her, operate upon her mind, that she could not rest till she came to her father's house, from whence she returned home under a strong conviction that she was a guilty, miserable sinner.

Encouraged from a thorough persuasion that God had begun a good work in his sister, Mr. Shadford visited her shortly after; and took her with him to bear Mr. Meggitt preach. The sermon pleased her much. A love-feast was held after preaching, and as she desired to attend it, she was, at the request of Mr. Shadford admitted. As the people were singing a hymn on Christ's coming to judgment, she looked up and saw all the people singing with visible joy in their countenances. She thought, "If Christ was to come to judgment now, I shall go to hell, and they will all go to heaven." Instantly she sunk down, as if dying, and lay some time before she was able to walk home.

She continued praying and waiting upon God for about a fortnight; when, one day going to the well to fetch water, she found the God of Jacob open to her thirsty soul a living fountain of divine consolation; and hence, as she returned from the well, her soul magnified the Lord, and her spirit rejoiced in God her Saviour. "So merciful (saith Mr. Shadford) was the Lord to my family, that four of them were brought to God in less than a year. My mother lived a happy witness of the love and favor of God three years, and died in peace. My father lived upwards of four years happy in God his Saviour, and used to say, 'Now I am a little child turned of four years old.' Meaning (although near sixty-five) that he had never lived to any good purpose, or the glory of God before. About half a year before his death, the Lord so circumcised his heart, as to enable him to love God with all his powers, and rejoice in the happy assurance that the blood of Christ had cleansed him from all unrighteousness.

When his father was taken ill of his last sickness, Mr. Shadford was preaching in Yorkshire. When he came near home, a friend told him that his father lay dying. As soon as the good old man saw him, he was much affected; for he greatly longed to see him before he died. He said, "Son, I am glad to see thee; but I am going to leave thee; I am going to God; I am going to heaven." Mr. Shadford said, "Father, are you sure of it?" "Yes, (said he,) "I am sure of it. I know that my Redeemer liveth. Upward of four years ago, the Lord pardoned all my sins; and half a year ago he gave me that perfect love that casts out all fear. At present, I feel a heaven within me. Surely this heaven below must lead to heaven above." "When (saith Mr. Shadford) I saw he was departing, I kneeled down by him, and with fervent prayer commended his soul to God; and I praise His holy name that he died in the full assurance of faith."

Mr. Shadford's sister lived a faithful witness of the love of Jesus sixteen years. She was remarkable for her strength of faith and fervency in prayer. She had eight or nine children; had nothing of this world's goods to leave them, but she left them a good example, and sent up many prayers to heaven for them. She used to say, "Brother, I believe all my children will be saved."

When he seemed to doubt it, she answered, "But I pray in faith and whatsoever we ask in prayer believing we shall receive." Her eldest daughter died before her a little, aged twenty-one, in the triumph of faith. "And (saith Mr. Shadford) it is remarkable, since her death, her children, as they grew up, one after another, are convinced of sin, brought to God, and join the Society."

Mr. Shadford mentions, with great affection and respect, a relation of his, who, during the course of twenty years, continued to pray for his conversion. He says that she enjoyed the love of God above fifty years; and that she died full of days and full of grace, at the very advanced age of ninety-five years.

Like most others, who, from religious principles, engage in the work of the ministry, Mr. Shadford had, about the beginning of his public labors, many doubts of his call to preach the gospel. He had no doubt with respect to its being his duty to do good in the contracted sphere in which he had acted for some time; but the idea of the important work of going forth publicly to call sinners to repentance, caused him to fear and tremble. After a great struggle in his mind, he resolved at last to make the trial.

The first place he went to from home, was called Wildsworth, where, at that time, it is supposed, there was not an individual savingly acquainted with God. On Saturday night, he continued three or four hours in fervent prayer, that the Lord might point out his way. On Sunday morning he set out alone to the little village, where, as soon as he arrived, he gave notice of his errand, and quickly he had a house full of people to hear him. In the first prayer he was favored with much divine assistance; and while he was engaged in it, some present began to weep. Under the preaching several were cut to the heart; and the Lord blessed his word to many. From Wildsworth he went, the same day, to East Ferry, where he preached in the street; and such was the enlargement of heart which he experienced, on both those occasions, that he returned home perfectly satisfied that God had called him to the work of the ministry.

But this satisfaction was shortly after succeeded by great discouragement which arose from a sight and sense of his weakness and ignorance. He reasoned with himself the grand adversary, until he was ready to conclude that God required impossibilities. He concluded that they were very happy, who were called to do no more than act in a private capacity, and were not burdened with the care of the souls of others. "I gave way (saith he) to this kind of reasoning for a month; till at times I made myself almost as miserable as a demon. Then the Lord laid his chastening rod upon me, and afflicted me for a season, and showed me the worth of poor souls perishing in the broad way to destruction.

After this, he was so encouraged, that he was willing to go to any part of the world, to which God might open his way. About this time, a more than ordinary degree of divine power accompanied his ministry; and, to use his own words, God's "word was like the flaming sword which turned every way, to every heart; for, sinners fell and trembled before it, and were convinced and converted to God." The condescension of God to him excited his astonishment. As soon as his labors were blessed to the awakening of some sinners, in any place, he formed a Society, which he took the first opportunity of putting under the care of the traveling preachers.

But by loud and long preaching, (two faults which ministers ought carefully to avoid,) and by walking more than his strength could bear, together with his praying and reading many times all night, he was soon so worn down as to appear in a swift decline. In the course of some time, he fell into a severe fever, which continued seven weeks; a complaint from which he had little hopes of recovery. In this affliction he was graciously and powerfully supported; so that he was so far from desiring to remain on earth, that he desired to depart, and to be with Christ. In the midst of this affliction, after some divine impressions had been made upon his mind, one day he opened his Bible on these words, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the work of the Lord." He then believed that he should recover. From this time he began to be restored to his wonted health and vigor.

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PART 4 -- FROM THE APRIL, 1818 ISSUE

Having preached occasionally for part of two years in the Epworth Circuit, and been a great blessing to many, he was, at the Bristol Conference, in the year 1768, appointed to labor in the west of Cornwall. "This (saith he,) was a good year to me. I often wondered how the people could bear with my weakness; but the Lord owned his poor servant, and gave me to see the fruit of my labors. I was one day in great danger of losing my life the first time I crossed Hale; but two men, at a distance, suddenly called aloud, bidding me stop and come back. Had I gone a few yards further, myself and horse must have been inevitably swallowed up in a quicksand. I felt thankful, and went on admiring the watchful providence of God, my gracious and almighty Deliverer."

Mr. Shadford labored the following year in Kent, where he was exercised with various trials; but in the midst of them all he was powerfully supported, and had the great happiness of seeing several sinners brought to a saving acquaintance with God. In 1770, he was sent to Norwich, and appointed to be what was then termed the Assistant, but since the death of Mr. Wesley, the Superintendent. On account of the mean opinion which he formed of his piety and talents, his appointment to that important office greatly exercised his mind. During his stay at Norwich, a revival took place, in the course of which several experienced the renewing and comforting influences of the Holy Spirit.

"After staying (saith Mr. Shadford,) two years at Norwich, I went to the Leeds Conference, where I first saw Captain Webb. When he warmly exhorted the preachers to go to America, I felt my spirit stirred within me to go; more especially when I understood that many hundreds of precious souls were perishing through lack of knowledge, scattered up and down in various parts of the woods, and had none to warn them of their danger. When I considered that we had in England many men of grace and gifts far superior to mine, but few seemed to offer themselves willingly, I then saw my call more clearly. Accordingly, Mr. Rankin and I offered ourselves to go the spring following, when I received a letter from Mr. Wesley informing me that I was to embark with Captain Webb at Bristol."

In censuring a superstitious attention to dreams, it is going to an unwarrantable length, to assert that none of them are of a divine nature. Surely the Father of spirits can instruct by "visions in the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men;" and that he frequently does so, we have

indubitable evidence. What proper judge and lover of truth, however much opposed to superstition, can possibly imagine that the following dream was the product of "either" a "multitude of business," or the effect of thought driven at random?

"When I arrived at Pill, (saith Mr. Shadford) where the ship lay, an awful dream, which I had six years before, was brought to my mind. I thought in my sleep I received a letter from God, which I opened and read, the substance of which was as follows: 'You must go to preach the gospel in a foreign land, unto a fallen people, a mixture of nations.'" I thought I was conveyed to the place where the ship lay, in which I was to embark, in an instant. The wharf and ship appeared as plain to me as if I had been awake. I replied, 'Lord, I am willing to go in thy name; but I am afraid a people of different nations and languages will not understand me.' An answer to this was given, 'Fear not, for I am with thee.' I awoke, awfully impressed with the presence of God upon my mind, and was really full of divine love; and a relish of it remained upon my spirit for many days. I could not tell what this meant, and revolved these things in my mind for a long time. But when I came to Pill, and saw the ship and wharf; then all came fresh to my mind. I said to brother Rankin this is the ship, the place, and the wharf; which I saw in my dream six years ago. All these things were the means of strengthening and confirming me that my way was of God."

On Good Friday, Mr. Shadford and the companion of his voyage, set sail for America; and after a comfortable voyage of eight weeks, they arrived safe at Philadelphia, where they were kindly received by a hospitable and loving people. In a few days after their arrival, Mr. Shadford crossed the river Delaware, and went to Trenton, where, in the course of a month, he added thirty-five to the Society, many of whom experienced much divine consolation.

In his tour through the Jerseys, he had an opportunity of conversing with Mr. John Brainerd, brother to the justly celebrated missionary, Mr. David Brainerd. "We conversed (saith Mr. Shadford) about two hours very profitably, about his brother David, and the Indians he had the care of; about Methodism and inward religion. He heartily wished us good luck, and said he believed the Lord had sent us upon the Continent to revive inward religion among them."

Mr. Shadford's next remove was to New York, where he spent four months, with great satisfaction. He went to that city with fear and trembling; being much cast down, from a sense of his unworthiness, and inability to preach to the edification of so polished and sensible a people. But his God, whom he found to be better to him than his boding fears had suggested, made him the instrument of a blessed revival there. During his short stay at New York, fifty members were added to the society; several backsliders were restored to their first love; and an earnest desire was excited in many believers for all the mind that was Christ.

Mr. Shadford gives a very pleasing account of the Society at Philadelphia, in which many, during his stay there, were turned from the evil of their ways. When he was about leaving that city, the following remarkable circumstance happened, an account of which will be given in his own words.

"When I went," saith he, "to the inn where my horse was, and had just entered into the yard, I observed a man fixing his eyes upon me, and looking earnestly until he seemed ashamed, and blushed very much. At length he came up to me and abruptly said, 'Sir, I saw you in a dream last

night. When I saw your back as you came into the yard I thought it was you; but now that I see your face, I am sure that you are the person. I have been wandering up and down until now, seeking you.' 'Saw me in a dream,' said I, 'what do you mean?' 'Sir,' said he, 'I did, I am sure I did: and yet I never saw you with my bodily eyes before. Yesterday in the afternoon I left this city and went as far Schuylkill river, intending to cross it, but began to be uneasy, and could not go over it; I therefore returned to this place, and last night, in my sleep, saw you stand before me; when a person from another world bade me seek for you until I found you, and said you would tell me what I must do to be saved. He said also that one particular mark by which I might know you was, that you preached in the streets and lanes of the city.' Having spoken this, he immediately asked, 'Pray Sir, are not you a minister?' I said, 'Yes, I am a preacher of the gospel; and it is true that I preach in the streets and lanes of the city, which no other preacher in Philadelphia does. I preach also every Sunday morning at nine o'clock in Newmarket.' I then asked him to step across the way to a friend's house, where I asked him from whence he came. He answered, 'From the Jerseys.' I asked whether he had any family; he said, 'Yes, a wife and children.' I asked where he was going; he said, he 'did not know.' I likewise asked, Does your wife know where you are; he said, 'No; the only reason why I left home was, I had been very uneasy and unhappy for half a year past, and could rest no longer, but came to Philadelphia.'

"I replied, 'I first advise you to go back to your wife and children, and take care of them, by obeying God in the order of his providence. It is unnatural, said I, to leave them in this manner: for even the birds of the air provide for their young. Secondly, you say you are unhappy; therefore the thing you want is religion; the love of God, and of all mankind; righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. When this takes possession of your heart, so as to destroy your evil tempers, and root out the love of the world, anger, pride, self-will, and unbelief; then you will be happy. The way to obtain this is you must forsake all your sins, and heartily believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. When you return to the Jerseys, go to hear the Methodist preachers constantly, and pray to the Lord to bless the word; and if you heartily embrace it, you will become a happy man."

"While I was exhorting him, tears ran plentifully from his eyes. We then knelt down to pray, and I was enabled to plead and intercede with much earnestness for his soul. When we arose from our knees, I shook him by the hand: he wept much, and had a broken heart; but did not know how to part with me. He then set out to go to his wife in the Jerseys, and I saw him no more; but I trust I shall meet him in heaven."

In this plain, unadorned account, we have another proof that God, by dreams, sometimes deigns, to instruct men in the path of duty.

Soon after this, Mr. Shadford went to Baltimore, where a young man came to him with two horses, and entreated him to go with him to his father's house, to visit his distressed brother who was chained in bed, and supposed to be either mad, or possessed of a devil. When he entered the room, he found the young man in the depth of despair. He told him that Christ died for sinners; that he came to seek and to save lost sinners; yea, that he received the chief of sinners; and added, "There is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved, but in and through our Lord Jesus. The young man laid hold on those words, "The name of Jesus Christ;" and said he would call upon Jesus Christ as long as he lived; and he found some little hope; but knew no more how he must be saved than an Indian.

Mr. Shadford sung a part of a hymn, and then the father and mother of the young man joined him in prayer. The power of God was present; and, saith Mr. Shadford "We had melted hearts, and weeping eyes, and indeed there was a shower of tears amongst us. I know not when I felt more of the divine presence, or power to wrestle with God than I did at this time. After we rose from our knees, I gave an exhortation. They loosed the young man that was bound; and the Lord shortly after loosed him from the chains of his sins, and set him at perfect liberty. He soon began to warn his neighbors, and to exhort sinners to flee from the wrath to come; and before I left the country, he began to travel in a circuit; and was remarkably successful. I followed him in Kent in Delaware; and verily believe that he was instrumental in awakening a hundred sinners that year."

The next year, Mr. Shadford was appointed for Virginia, where, for some time he was much dejected in spirit. He says that he saw himself so vile and worthless as he could not express; and that he wondered God should employ him in his work. Before honor is humility; and hence, after Mr. Shadford had been deeply humbled, such success attended his labors in Virginia, that he seldom preached a sermon without some being convinced or converted, and often three or four at a time.

The singular case of one of the converts in Virginia deserves particular notice; nor can it be better represented than in Mr. Shadford's own words. "Among these (the new converts) was a dancing-master, who came first to hear on a week day, dressed in scarlet; and came several miles again on Sunday dressed in green. After preaching he spoke to me, and asked, if I could come to that part where he lived some day in the week? I told him I could not, as I was engaged every day. I saw him again at preaching that week, and another man of his profession. When I was going to preach one morning, a friend said to me, 'Mr. Shadford, you spoiled a line dancing-master last week. He was so cut under preaching, and feels such a load of sin upon his conscience, that he moves very heavily; nay, he cannot shake his heels at all. He had a profitable school; but hath given it up, and is determined to dance no more. He intends now to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic.' I said it is very well, what is his name?" He said, "he is called Madcap!" I said, "a very proper name for a dancing-master; but I found this was only a nick-name, for his real name was Metcalf. He began to teach school, joined our society, found the guilt and load of his sin removed from his conscience, and the pardoning love of God shed abroad in his heart. He lived six or seven years after, and died a great witness for God, having been one of the most devoted men in our connection.

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PART 5 -- FROM THE MAY, 1818 ISSUE

There are few subjects, in the contemplation of which men of season and religion find more pleasure, than in that of Divine Providence, which so regulates the most minute, as well as the greatest occurrences, as to make them subservient to the best interests of God's rational offspring. He who governs the universe, by the direction of infinite wisdom, in conjunction with infinite love, can, at His pleasure, so regulate events which are generally considered as mere effects of secondary causes as to make them concur in promoting his gracious purposes. A great fall of rain, with a consequent flood, in the hands of him to whose control universal nature, in all its parts, is

subject, was made, by the circumstances attending it, instrumental in beginning a glorious revival of religion in Virginia. Stopped by the flood in question, from attending to his regular appointment, Mr. Shadford's steps were directed to a place where his labors were much needed, and where God made him the honored instrument of saving several souls from death. His own account of the providential circumstance under consideration, with its effects, is as follows:

"Going to preach one day, I was stopped by a large flood of water, and could not come at the bridge. I therefore returned back about half a mile to a large plantation: and having found the planter, I told him my case, and asked if I could sleep at his house. He said I was welcome. After I had taken a little refreshment, I asked if that part of the country was well inhabited; and on his answering in the affirmative, I said, "If it is agreeable to you, and you will send out to acquaint your neighbors, I will preach to them in the evening." He sent out, and we had many hearers; but they were as wild as bears. After I reproved them, they behaved very well under the preaching. When I conversed with the planter and his wife, I found them entirely ignorant of themselves and of God. I labored to convince them both, but it seemed to little purpose. Next morning I was stopped again, when he kindly offered to show me a way, some miles about, and go with me to preaching. I thanked him, and accepted his offer. As I was preaching that day I saw him weeping much. The Spirit of God opened the poor creature's eyes, and he saw the wretched state he was in. He staid with me that night, and made me promise to go again to preach at his house. In a short time he and his wife became deep penitents, and were soundly converted to God. A very remarkable work began from that little circumstance, and before I left Virginia, there were sixty or seventy raised up in that settlement. There were four traveling preachers that year on the circuit. We added eighteen hundred members, and we had good reason to believe that a thousand of them were converted to God."

About this time, disaffection to the British government began to prevail in the American colonies, and as Mr. Shadford continued to pray for the king, and would not take the test oath, he could not obtain a pass, nor travel without one; hence he looked upon it as his duty to return to England. "I had, saith he; sworn allegiance to the king twice, and could not swear to renounce him for ever."

On his way to Maryland, not long before Mr. Shadford embarked for England, he was in great danger of perishing in the woods. "It being, saith he, the depth of winter, I was one night lost in the woods, when it was very cold and the snow a foot deep on the ground. I could find no house, nor see any traveler, and I knew I must perish if I continued there all night. I alighted from my horse, kneeled upon the snow, and prayed earnestly to God to direct me. When I arose I believed I should have something to direct me. I stood listening a short space, and at last heard a dog bark at a distance, so followed the sound, and after some time found a house and plantation."

Mr. Shadford, accompanied by another Methodist preacher, waited upon General Smallwood, who granted them a pass, on condition of their swearing that they would go directly to Philadelphia, and from thence embark to Great Britain. On their complying with the condition proposed, he dismissed them, without giving them any further trouble. Shortly after, they arrived at Philadelphia, where they met three or four preachers, who, like themselves, were refugees. "I continued, saith Mr. S. six weeks before I got a passage, and then embarked for Cork, in Ireland; from thence to Wales, and then crossed the Passage to Bristol."

Though Mr. Shadford's account of himself did not appear before 1790, it bears date October 15, 1785. About the close of that account, he says, "Last year indeed was a year of afflictions and trials to me. I was poorly in body most of the year, often very unable to travel, and sometimes had thoughts of desisting on that account. But I bless God things are changed; it seems as if the Lord had given me a new commission, and added strength to body and mind. Since I came into the Kent circuit, I set apart some hours in order to pray, that God might deepen the work of grace in my own soul, and make me more useful to others. He soon heard and answered, and hath brought my soul into such liberty and fellowship with himself; that he is always present. There is no time when my Beloved is absent by day or night; neither do I feel that propensity to sin as before.

We shall close this Memoir of Mr. Shadford, with the following particulars sent us by Mr. John Riles.

"He prayed and preached, till disease and infirmity arrested him in his career. After having traveled for twenty-three years, he became a supernumerary; but instead of burying himself in obscurity, or sinking into indolence, he evinced the same unabated ardor and love for the souls of men, and the prosperity of the church of God, which he had done, during the vigor of his health. He neither outlived his piety nor his usefulness. It was evident to all who had an intimate acquaintance with him, that he enjoyed communion and fellowship with God, and was ripening for eternal glory. The members of his two classes had a high opinion of his piety, and when assembled round him, hung upon his lips, eagerly expecting some word of instruction or comfort: for they had no doubt that God would make him an honored instrument for their good. His method of meeting his classes, was remarkably conciliating: there was nothing rough or austere in his manners; he blended the most benevolent feelings with faithfulness, and never appeared satisfied, unless all the people under his immediate care, loved God with all their hearts, with all their strength, and with all their might. To these, his advice was, "Grow in grace."

"On Monday, Feb. 28, Mr. Shadford dined with his affectionate friend Mr. Blunt, in company with his brethren; he then appeared in tolerable health, and eat a hearty dinner. In the course of the week he felt indisposed, from a complication of diseases. He was under no apprehension at this time, that his departure was so near, as he had frequently felt similar affections; and by timely applications to his medical friend Mr. Bush, had been relieved. On Friday, March 1, he, with some difficulty, met his class, and afterwards said, it was impressed on his mind he should never meet it more. On the Saturday afternoon, I called to inquire about his health; when he said with unusual fervor,

To patient faith, the prize is sure
And all that to the end endure
The cross, shall wear the crown.'

His mind seemed fully occupied with the great and interesting realities of eternity, and he had no greater pleasure than in meditating and talking of the dying love of God. On the Lord's day morning, March 10, before I went to the chapel, I called to see him, and found he had slept most of the night; from this we flattered ourselves the complaint had taken a favorable turn, and were in

hopes of his recovery. But when the doctor called, he said the disease was fast approaching to a crisis, and it was impossible for him to recover: upon this information, Mr. Shadford broke out in a rapture, and exclaimed, 'Glory be to God!' Upon the subject of his acceptance with God, and assurance of eternal glory, he had not the shadow of a doubt. While he lay in view of an eternal world, and was asked if all was clear before him; he replied, "I bless God, it is;" and added, "Victory victory! through the blood of the Lamb!" When Mrs. Shadford was sitting by him, he repeated, "What surprise! what surprise!" I suppose he was reflecting upon his deliverance from a corruptible body, and his entrance into the presence of his God and Saviour, where every scene surpasses all imagination, and the boldest fancy returns wearied and unsatisfied in its loftiest flights. Two friends, who were anxious for his recovery, called upon him, and when they inquired how he was, he replied, 'I am going to my Father's house, and find religion to be an angel in death.' A pious lady, in the course of the day, was particularly desirous of seeing him, and she asked him to pray for her: he inquired, 'What shall I pray for?' She said, "That I may meet you in heaven, to cast my blood-bought crown at the feet of my Redeemer:" he said, with great energy, "The prize is sure." His pious sayings were numerous, and will long live in the recollection of many: but a collection of them all would swell this article beyond due limits. His last words were, 'I'll praise, I'll praise, I'll praise;' and a little after fell asleep in Jesus, on March 11, 1816, in the 78th year of his age.

"For nearly fifty four years, Mr. Shadford had enjoyed a sense of the Divine favor, His conduct and conversation sufficiently evinced the truth of his profession. For many years he had professed to enjoy that perfect love which excludes all slavish fear and if Christian tempers and a holy walk are proofs of it, his claims were legitimate. Maintaining an humble dependence upon the merits of the Redeemer, he steered clear of both Pharasaism and Antinomianism: his faith worked by love. Truly happy himself, there was nothing forbidding in his countenance, sour in his manners, or severe in his observations. His company was always agreeable, and his conversation profitable. If there was any thing stern in his behavior, it was assumed; to silence calumniators and religious gossips. In short, he was a man of prayer, and a man of God.

"His abilities as a preacher were not above mediocrity; yet he was a very useful laborer in the vineyard of the Lord in illustrating the doctrines of the gospel, he was simple, plain, and clear. His discourses, though not labored, were methodical, full of scriptural phraseology, delivered with pathos, and accompanied with the blessing of God. He did not perplex his hearers with abstruse reasoning and metaphysical distinctions; but aimed to feed them with the bread of life; and instead of sending them to a dictionary for an explanation of a difficult word, he pointed them to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

"Mr. Shadford was free and generous. His little annual income, managed with a strict regard to economy, supplied his wants, and left a portion for the poor and needy. In visiting the sick, while he assisted them by his prayers and advice, he cheerfully administered to their wants, He, spent no idle time in needless visits or unmeaning chit-chat.; and though many of his kind friends in Frome would have considered it a high favor if he could have been prevailed upon to partake of their bounty, yet he always declined it, except once a week, at the hospitable table of his generous friend Mr. Blunt, where he generally met the preachers with some part of their families. He loved his brethren in the ministry; and, like an old soldier who had survived many a campaign, he felt a pleasure in retracing the work of God, in which he had been engaged for more than half a

century. He claimed it as a right, and deemed it a privilege to have the preachers to take tea with him every Saturday afternoon. There was nothing sordid in his disposition, and as far as I could ever observe, covetousness formed no part of his character. He considered the rule of his Saviour as having a peculiar claim upon his attention; 'Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven.'

"His patience and resignation to the will of God were such that he has left few superiors in those passive graces. Some years since he lost his eye-sight, and continued in this state of affliction for several years: but instead of murmuring at this dispensation of Providence, he bore it with Christian fortitude. This did not altogether prevent his usefulness; for though the sphere of his action was circumscribed by it, he could still pray with the afflicted, converse with the pious, and meet several classes in the week. In this state, he was advised to submit to an operation for the recovery of his sight. The trial proved successful, and when the surgeon said, 'Sir, now you will have the pleasure of seeing to use your knife and fork; Mr. Shadford feelingly replied, 'Doctor, I shall have a greater pleasure, that of seeing to read my Bible.'" This luxury he enjoyed: for when he was permitted to use his eye-sight, the first thing he did, was to read the word of life for three hours: reading and weeping with inexpressible joy. During the whole of his last short illness, he betrayed no symptoms of uneasiness; but cheerfully submitted to the will of God. Through the last few years of his life, he glided smoothly down the stream of time. The assiduous attention of Mrs. Shadford to all his wants; her sympathy in the moments of his pain; and unwearied attempts, either to prevent his sufferings, or lessen their force, greatly tended to soften them down. She has lost a pious and an affectionate husband, and the Methodist Society in Frome one of its best members.

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THE END