

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication  
Copyright 1999 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and  
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with  
the restrictions stated in the B4Ucopy.txt file on this CD.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **LIFE SKETCHES OF ALFRED COOKMAN**

**By William McDonald**

"He was not Pauline, but he was Johanine. He was the brother of John. He leaned upon his Master's breast, from whom he drew his inspiration." -- Bishop R. S. Foster, at the funeral of Alfred Cookman.

Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye  
New York: Eaton & Mains

Printed Book Copyright, 1900  
By J. W. Hamilton

\* \* \* \* \*

Digital Edition 02/26/99  
By Holiness Data Ministry

\* \* \* \* \*

## **PREFACE**

We have been induced to prepare this brief life of our esteemed friend and brother, Alfred Cookman, to meet a long-felt need; viz., a comprehensive account of this holy man, adapted to the great mass of the Church whom he loved, and who love and revere his memory. The late Dr. H. B. Ridgaway, some years ago, wrote a most exhaustive life of this good man, which was, in all respects, worthy of the scholarly author. It was a book of nearly 500 pages, published by the Harpers, and sold at \$2 per copy. It seemed to have failed in two particulars: It was too expensive for people of moderate means, and too bulky and exhaustive for busy people, who have little leisure for reading.

The present volume seeks to avoid these extremes. We have sought to present in a condensed form all that is essential to a proper understanding and appreciation of the character of this saintly man.

We are indebted to the Messrs. Harpers for permission to use a few selections from the aforesaid Life, as the work has for some time been out of print.

People of small means, equally with those of abundance, will find this Life of Alfred Cookman, small as it is, an inspiration to holy living, and a blessing which will cheer and help them in the struggles and conflicts of life.

In view of Mr. Cookman's deep, lifelong interest in the colored race, we have arranged that the entire profits from the sale of this work shall be devoted to the benefit of the Freedmen's Aid and Southern Education Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Our fervent prayer is that the spirit of Alfred Cookman may possess all the workers in this field, as well as the people for whom they labor. This will fully compensate the writer for any labor he has performed, and will fully meet the wishes of Mrs. Cookman and her children.

\* \* \* \* \*

## INTRODUCTION

The vision of John Fletcher's face often sent conviction to the sinner's heart. Edward Perronet, who wrote the immortal hymn,

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,  
Let angels prostrate fall,"

had a brother, William, who testified that the first sight of Fletcher's face so impressed him that he never got over it till he gave his heart to God.

Dr. Daniel Devinne, once a missionary in the then remote wilds of Louisiana, wrote Dr. Abel Stevens, the historian of Methodism, that on his circuit he found a settler who had been reproved by Fletcher of Madeley for profanity. He was struck dumb by the look of the vicar, and though afterwards he went to sea and forgot the words of rebuke and was recklessly wicked, that look never escaped his mind. It followed him everywhere, into whatever part of the world he went, and annoyed him in all his sins. On penetrating into Louisiana, and hearing the Methodist itinerant -- fifty years later -- the remembered "look" overpowered him. No longer resisting the impression which had followed him the world over, he yielded, obtained pardon, lived a holy life, and soon after died in great peace.

The Church of God has always had such "solar-light" believers. Isaiah speaks of them when he says, "All that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed."

Such a face had Alfred Cookman. Who that ever saw it can forget it? The vision of it has sent conviction to many a sinner's heart. "The beauty of holiness" was there.

As he moved among us, and preached to us the Word of Life, thousands were moved to seek and find the "full salvation," to the possible attainment of which he bore such glorious witness.

There are some expressions of Scripture which must seem like poetic exaggerations to an unspiritual mind; such as, "The peace of God which passeth all understanding;" "Joy unspeakable and full of glory;" "A weight of glory;" but when these expressions are interpreted in the light of such an experience as that of Alfred Cookman, they seem exactly fitted to describe it.

Words less intense would not suit the case at all. When his countenance was in repose, you would think of the "peace that passeth all understanding;" when preaching the Word, and breaking the bread of life to the people, you would think of the "joy unutterable;" and when, in answer to his prayer, the Holy Ghost fell upon the congregation, you would think of and feel "the weight of glory."

The holiness which Alfred Cookman professed and possessed is what the Church needs today -- beyond all words to tell.

Many well-meaning people who profess this blessing are "troublers of Israel," by their egotism, by their censorious spirit, by their habit of finding fault with those who do not accept their teachings. There was nothing of this about Alfred Cookman. He was brilliant and effective in controversy, but always kind.

It is said of Fletcher's controversial writings: "They were severe only in the keenness of their arguments." "They can be read by devout men even as aids to devotion." It was so with the sermons and writings of Alfred Cookman. No severe criticism ever fell from his lips. He drank in the very spirit of a little verse Bishop Capers once wrote in a lady's album --

"Let me be tender when I touch  
The meanest name to Jesus dear,  
Lest my rude hand inflict a wound  
Where Jesus' mercy drops a tear."

He never believed in the denunciatory method of getting people to see the truth.

He believed in the possibility of a victorious life in this world, and that is the most glorious dream that ever floated before a human soul. He sought with all his might to lead the Church he loved into this blessed experience. He was cheering on the Sacramental Host when the messenger came to summon him home to heaven. When, as we thought, we needed him most, he disappeared from our sight for a little while.

Mr. William McDonald has written the story of his life, and in doing this he has done the Church a great service. This little book should be universally read. Pastors who desire to kindle in their congregations a flame of revival, should circulate this book freely among the people. It teaches the "conquering theology" that never grows old -- that never can be supplanted; the theology which is interwoven with the promises and prayers and prophecies of the Holy Scriptures so thoroughly that nothing but the utter destruction of almost every page of the book itself will get it out of the Church and out of the world. It is the theology of Paul, and Wesley, and Asbury. "By this

sign conquer." Preach it, live it, and we shall see what John Fletcher spoke of as that "glorious wonder," A PENTECOSTAL CHURCH ON EARTH.

Charles C. McCabe

\* \* \* \* \*

## CONTENTS

- 1  
Parentage and Childhood
- 2  
Shadows and Home Desolation
- 3  
The Mother of Alfred Cookman
- 4  
The Manly Youth and Family Counselor
- 5  
The Great Salvation Experienced
- 6  
Natural Graces and Holy Life
- 7  
Ardent Love for American Bondmen
- 8  
Alfred Cookman, a Model Family Man
- 9  
A Loving Leader of the National Holiness Movement
- 10  
The National Holiness Movement -- Continued
- 11  
The Successful Pastor and Persuasive Preacher
- 12  
Pastor and Preacher -- Continued
- 13

## Final Triumph: Sweeping Through The Gates

\* \* \* \* \*

### Chapter 1

#### PARENTAGE AND CHILDHOOD

Few men have been called from the Church Militant who have left a more widely-extended and hallowed influence than Alfred Cookman. His dying words have been an inspiration to the Universal Church in all lands, and this influence must continue to be felt as the years go by.

He belonged to seraphic royalty," said Bishop Foster, in an address delivered at his funeral. "I have known," he continued, "the Church for thirty years; I have known the men of the Church during that time through all her ministry; and the most sacred man I have known" (looking down into the casket before him) "is he who is enshrined in that casket." The following pages contain a brief memoir of this saintly man.

Alfred Cookman was born in Columbia, Pennsylvania, a town on the Susquehanna River, January 4, 1828. His father, Rev. George G. Cookman, was an Englishman by birth, born in Hull, England, in 1800. His father was a local preacher among the Wesleyan Methodists, and, being a man of wealth, his son enjoyed the advantages of a careful academical education, as well as a thorough religious training. He early developed a rare ability for public speaking, especially at Sunday School anniversaries and similar meetings.

When but twenty-one years of age, George G. Cookman made a business trip to America in the interests of his father, and while here conceived a strong liking for the people and country. On his return to England, he devoted himself to business, in company with his father, and for some four years he could be said to be "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." He finally was fully persuaded that it was his duty to preach the gospel, and, acting upon that decision, made some successful attempts. His father finally consented to release him, and, his mother concurring, he started again for America, in 1825. He was cordially received by the brethren in Philadelphia, and at the ensuing Annual Conference, he was received on probation, and stationed at Kensington. He was soon recognized as a man of extraordinary pulpit power.

In 1827 he made a brief visit to England, and while there was married to Miss Mary Barton, of Doncaster, Yorkshire, April 2d. With his new helpmate, in all respects suited to aid him in his great work, he returned, without delay, to his field of labor in America. George G. Cookman spent the remainder of his life in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Few ministers, if any, have ever labored in this country with more ceaseless energy, unswerving devotion to God, and marked success in every field in which he was called to labor.

No man in American Methodism -- John Summerfield, perhaps, excepted -- in the brief period in which he was permitted to labor, ever produced a more profound impression. He enjoyed a national reputation as the most brilliant and effective preacher in America. His unrivaled eloquence attracted all classes, from the highest officials of the nation to the humblest in society. When he spoke, in the pulpit or from the platform, it seemed that every nerve and muscle

of his frame was full of excitement, and clearly indicated that his lips had been touched with a live coal from off God's altar, and his one aim seemed to be, not to produce an effect, but to win men to God.

In 1839 he was elected chaplain to the American Congress. Here, perhaps, his influence as a preacher was most widely felt. Great men bowed under his eloquent appeals, as forests are swayed by the tempest. He had the reputation of being a man of deep religious devotion and of employing all of his great powers in winning men, not to himself, but to the Lord Jesus Christ. This seemed to be his sole aim.

When he had completed his chaplaincy in Congress, in 1841, he arranged to visit England, mainly to see again his aged father, his mother having already passed to her reward. He sailed from New York, March 11th, on the ill-fated steamship President. Neither the ship nor any of her company were ever after heard of. She may have foundered in a violent storm at sea, no one of the company escaping to tell the story of their end.

Thus ended suddenly, and to the great grief of his young family and numerous friends and admirers, the life of the father of Alfred Cookman.\*

[\*For more on the life Alfred Cookman and more of the life of his father, George G. Cookman, see in the HDM Library: HDM0602.tex -- The Life of Alfred Cookman -- Henry Bascom Ridgaway; and hdm0680.tex -- Alfred Cookman's Father -- Duane V. Maxey. HDM0680 contains some of the writings of George G. Cookman. On the triumphant death of Alfred Cookman, see: HDM0269.tex -- Sweeping Through The Gates -- Duane V. Maxey]

Alfred bore the name of his honored uncle, but recently deceased, who, it seems, was a man of more than ordinary intellectual ability and moral excellence.

The grandfather, on learning of his son's first-born, writes from Hull: "We were delighted to find the name Alfred should not become extinct in our family. May he exhibit a large share of his uncle's intellectual and moral character, and may his mental powers in due time become as vigorous as his person is likely to be robust! May you receive him as a gift of God, and while you gratefully acknowledge his supporting and sustaining hand, may you and the child be entirely consecrated to him!" This prayer was answered, at least so far as Alfred was concerned; for he was a man, like Stephen, "full of faith and the Holy Ghost." The mother felt for a time that the gift of a son, however precious, was likely to abridge her fancied opportunities for such religious work as both she and her husband had hoped to do. But she subsequently learned, to her great joy, that to rear a Moses, who should lead God's people into

"The land of rest from inbred sin,  
The land of perfect holiness,"

was a work as divinely appointed and as highly honored as the preaching of the gospel by any other method.

When about four years of age, his father traveled the Talbot Circuit, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. This was in the days of American slavery. It was on this circuit that Alfred had his first view of American slavery, but in its mildest forms. It was here he became most interested in slave children. He is said, at this early age, to have held religious services among them, and even went so far as to imitate the ordinance of baptism. He would call for a bowl of water, cause them to kneel down, and then proceed to say: "Bob Trot, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. God bless you and make you a good boy!" This was not done in boyish sport, as one might suppose, but with great apparent seriousness, as often occurs with children who have been religiously trained or have witnessed frequently such ceremonies. His mother was ever watching for every religious manifestation which looked toward the ministry; for her desire was quenchless that he might yet be a successful minister of the gospel. She hailed every such indication as evidence that God was preparing him for his future work.

During these years Alfred, according to his mother's statement, was correct in his deportment, truthful, and very conscientious. His father is said to have impressed upon his youthful mind the maxim, "Play when you play, and work when you work."

From his fifth to his seventh year, while his father was pastor of St. George's Church, in Philadelphia, Alfred and his brother George were placed under the care of Miss Ann Thomas, a member of the Society of Friends, and under her careful instruction improved rapidly in the elementary branches of education. None regretted more deeply their departure from the school than their Quaker teacher. In writing to their mother, she says: "I can give my testimony respecting thy dear boys, that I have enjoyed great consolation in their company. While endeavoring to inform their little minds and give them a knowledge of literature, they have been attentive and obedient, very innocent, and strict to truth, and in almost everything what my heart could wish. Tell them to remember Miss Ann, who dearly loves them, and wishes them everlasting happiness."

When [Alfred Cookman was] seven years of age, his father was stationed in the city of Baltimore, Maryland, and under his marvelously effective ministry Alfred became deeply awakened. He persuaded his parents to allow him to attend a watch-night service, held in the old Exeter Street Church. His father preached on the occasion. His subject was "The Second Coming of Christ." In his own language, Alfred says: "Thinking that the end of the world was just at hand, I realized, for the first time, my unpreparedness for the trying scenes of the judgment, and trembled in prospect. I date my awakening from this time." His father was soon removed from Baltimore to Carlisle, Pennsylvania, to meet a pressing demand of the Church.

The Baltimore and Philadelphia Conferences had recently purchased of the Presbyterians' Dickinson College, and there seemed no other man so well adapted to be stationed in that town as Mr. Cookman. They needed a man of marked pulpit power, as well as deep devotion. The faculty of the college consisted of John P. Durbin, Robert Emory, H. W. Allen, John McClintock, and A. A. Roszel. These men, fresh in their young manhood, and with George G. Cookman as their spiritual leader, were a company scarcely equaled in the land. Alfred was now only ten years of age, but old enough to be profoundly impressed with his peculiar surroundings. Here he entered the grammar school with his brother George, and from what we can learn he was, in his own judgment, pressed in his studies almost beyond measure, or at least much beyond what he thought needful, and in this respect was much like other boys of his age.

It was at Carlisle, in the month of February, 1838, that Alfred Cookman was converted. A protracted meeting was being held, and he says: "I concluded 'now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.' One night, when a social meeting was held in the house of a friend, I struggled with my feelings, and, although it was a fearful cross, I urged my way to a bench which was specially appropriated for penitents. My heart was convulsed with penitential sorrow; tears streaming down my cheeks, I said, 'Jesus, Jesus, I give myself away; 'tis all that I can do.' For some hours I sought, without, however, realizing the desire of my heart. The next evening I renewed the effort. The evening after that the service was held in the church; the altar was crowded with seekers, principally students from Dickinson College. There seemed to be no place for me, an agonizing child. I remember I found my way into one corner of the church. Kneeling all alone, I said, 'Precious Savior, thou art saving others; O wilt thou not save me?' As I wept, a kind hand was laid upon my head. I opened my eyes, and found that it was Mr. James Hamilton, a prominent elder in the Presbyterian Church in Carlisle. He had come to help me. I remember how sweetly he unfolded the nature of faith and the plan of salvation. I said, 'I will believe, I do believe, I now believe that Jesus is my Savior; that he saves me, saves; yes, me, even now.' Immediately,

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

I love to think of it now," he says, in after years. "It fills my soul unutterably full of gratitude and joy. 'Happy day, O happy day, when Jesus washed my sins away!'"

His conversion seems to have been clear. The Spirit attested the work, and Alfred Cookman went on his way rejoicing.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 2 SHADOWS AND HOME DESOLATION

At the close of Mr. George G. Cookman's two years at Carlisle, he was removed to the National Capital. Other cities sought his services, but Washington was successful in securing them. Wesley Chapel was the center of Methodist influence in the city. Many, including members of Congress, and visitors to the city from all denominations, were attracted by the unexampled eloquence of Mr. Cookman. In 1838-39, Mr. Cookman was elected chaplain of the Senate, by a decided vote, over Rev. Henry Slicer, D. D. There does not seem to have been any special objection to Dr. Slicer, for he was subsequently elected to the same office; but Mr. Cookman captivated all classes, Whigs and Democrats, though he himself seems personally to have had no part in the matter. He seemed equally at home with the men of world-wide fame -- the Websters, and Calhouns, and Clays, and Bentons, etc., as well as with the schoolmen of Carlisle. Strong men were awakened to a sense of their danger under his powerful ministry, among them Franklin Pierce, representative from New Hampshire. There is little doubt that Mr. Pierce intended to unite with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and abandon politics for the ministry; but family influences



turned him aside from his purpose. He united with the Episcopal Church, and died a member of that communion.

Alfred Cookman's removal to Washington does not seem to have been helpful to his piety. A change of scenery and associations had a tendency to turn his thoughts for a time from God, but not from his religious faith. Writing of this period, he says, "I fell in with new associates, who felt no interest in the subject of religion, and declined a little in my warmth and zeal, and partook a little too much of their spirit." But this was of short duration. The camp-meeting season was at hand, and he expressed a desire to attend. On leaving for the camp-meeting, his mother said to him, "My son, I want you to seek at the meeting an entire restoration of your former happy experience, and regain every step you have lost by want of watchfulness." He says: "Her counsel followed me to the forest. I sought God again. I remember the night. The struggle was long and painful; it continued almost to the breaking of day. Glory to God! However, He who said, 'Return unto me, backsliding Israel, and I will heal thy backsliding and love thee freely,' heard and answered, and restored unto me the joy of his salvation. O, how beautiful the following morning appeared! The sky seemed bluer than before, the air sweeter, the trees greener, the landscape lovelier; all nature seemed to appear in a new dress. I felt like saying, 'Come, all ye who fear God, and I will tell you what he has done for my soul!' My precious father had gone off the ground to spend the night. I knew the way he would most probably return. I hastened in that direction, saw him coming, sprang into his arms, fell on his neck, and told him how happy I was. Since then I have had a place in the Church of Jesus Christ. In the midst of great unfaithfulness and unworthiness, God has borne with and preserved me, and now I feel to say,

'Here I'll raise mine Ebenezer,  
Hither by Thy help I'm come.'

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

From that time to the end of life, camp-meetings were hallowed places to Alfred Cookman. While in Washington he received many commendations for successful efforts in public speaking, in which he seems to have indulged. It could scarcely be otherwise with such a mind as his, and in the very atmosphere of national eloquence. Two years passed rapidly, and his father, still chaplain of the Senate, was removed to Alexandria, Virginia, then a part of the District of Columbia, but since receded to the State of Virginia.

Had Alfred seen only the milder forms of slavery, witnessed on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, his impressions of it would have been less abhorrent. But when he arrived at Alexandria he found that near his home was a slave-pen, where human beings were sold almost daily, and doomed to a life of unpaid service in the rice-swamps and cotton fields of the South. Men, women, and children he saw behind iron grates, and manacled, for no crime save that they were born with black skins. Here he witnessed scenes which ought to have broken any human heart, and did quite break the heart of young Cookman. It induced in him, from that time, a deep and life-long abhorrence of that system of slavery which John Wesley pronounced "the vilest that ever saw the sun," and he never failed to give his voice and influence against it.

One year later, 1841, his father's chaplaincy closed, and he arranged to visit England, and thought at first to take Alfred with him, but subsequently changed his purpose, Alfred saying, "I will stay with my mother, and help her take care of the children." His father's fame was commensurate with the American Republic, but that brilliant orb was soon to set at noonday. Among his last words to his children, as they sat by the fireside, were these, "Now, boys, if your father sinks in the ocean, his soul will go direct to God, and you will meet him in heaven." He preached his last sermon in the Vestry Street Methodist Church, New York City, Monday, March 9th, where he was to be stationed on his return. He had intended to take a Cunard steamer from Boston, but was induced to change his mind, and embarked on board the steamship President, March 11th, and, as we have before said, neither steamer nor passengers were ever after heard from. No voice from the sea ever came to tell the story of their end. There were many conjectures,

sorrow which fell upon the Cookman home can be better imagined than described. Day after day, and week after week, the suspense was heart-rending. Mrs. Cookman could not give up hope, but as time passed on and no tidings from the sea came, it was hope against hope. Alfred was the eldest of a family of six, and they looked to him for consolation. The mother was in the agonies of despair. It seemed at times as though her mind could not stand the fearful pressure. Hopes so bright, prospects of usefulness and domestic bliss so inspiring to her enthusiastic heart, to be blighted in a day, and a darkness that could be more than felt succeed so suddenly, seemed utterly unbearable. The deepest gloom seemed to rest upon her for at least two years. She could not endure to hear her husband's name pronounced in her presence without the deepest sorrow, so that it was carefully avoided. Alfred was but thirteen years of age, but his composure in the presence of his afflicted, heartbroken mother was remarkable for one of his years. He used to say in after years, "How I did dread to return home from the post-office to meet my dear mother without a letter, and see her disappointment!"

Alfred Cookman appears at this time a most remarkable youth. This great sorrow seems to have developed the latent force and godly wisdom of this boy of thirteen years. He fully realized his position, and he faithfully tried, as his mother avers, to "fill up the chasm made by a wise though inscrutable Providence. Eternity alone will unfold as he was to the family as son and as brother in the years of his minority."

\* \* \* \* \*

### Chapter 3 THE MOTHER OF ALFRED COOKMAN

This seems a proper place to give some account of the life and character of Mrs. Cookman. We have already spoken of her marriage to Mr. Cookman, April 2, 1827, and her coming to America, as she supposed, into a "wilderness," to spend her life in self-sacrifice and toil for the perishing. Instead of great sacrifice, she found herself associated with the best society of the land, and her husband enjoying the greatest and most widely-extended honor which a grateful nation could bestow on a messenger of God. All at once her highest hopes are blasted, and deep sorrow fills her soul. A large, young, and helpless family is left to her care, and her husband sleeping in the ocean's deepest bed. How changed her life! But God's ways are not ours --

"Sorrow touched by Him grows bright  
With more than raptured ray,  
As darkness shows us worlds of light  
We never saw by day."

This great sorrow proved to be a great blessing. On the last anniversary of her marriage day, she writes: "This is one of my very sacred anniversary seasons, which I cherish with deep and devout gratitude to the Author and Giver of all my temporal as well as spiritual gifts. The second day of April, 1827, made me one of the happiest, brightest individuals in the world. I say it without limitation, that to become the wife and sharer of such a man's life, with its toils, cares, trials, and triumphs, was bliss enough for me, honor enough to be his dearly beloved and cherished companion, with his great, true, generous heart heating and pulsating towards me always and everywhere.

"Mary Barton, when she became Mary Cookman, reached the acme of her highest soaring of a true and happy life. Satisfaction and joy met us in every path in which we were called to walk, and our deep devotion knew no blight, until the last fearful gaze was exchanged, until the last fearful word was spoken, and he who had been all the world to me vanished from my sight. Little thought I of the sequel that was to come; the bitterness and grief, such as rarely falls to the lot of humanity, and yet so touched with mercy, which can never be appreciated by human thought and expressed by human language, until we reach the heights of the glory land. I have known unspeakable joy, I have known the depths of sorrow, and yet the heights and depths of the love of Christ are more to me than the love of ten husbands."

It was in the midst of this great sorrow that she found the great blessing of entire sanctification, which lifted her out of her sorrow. While she could see no Justice, no mercy, no love in this dispensation of Providence, God led her to see that a Father's hand and a Father's loving heart were seeking her greatest good. He had taken her idol George, but he had given her himself, who is the "Chief among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely."

She came, with her children, by the aid of friends, to reside in Baltimore, near the Eutaw Street Methodist Church. It was in this church, on the holy Sabbath, as she knelt at the Lord's table, with a heart looking to God for comfort, as the Rev. Nelson Mead gave her the cup, saying, "The blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for thee," she felt in a moment that the blood of Jesus Christ did cleanse her from all sin. A great, unspeakable joy came into her heart, and her will was lost in the Divine will. Never for a moment thereafter "did she question God's justice, wisdom, and love." Christ became all in all to her. Henceforth, on all fitting occasions, she continued to the end of life to give a clear, emphatic testimony to the enjoyment of the blessing of entire sanctification. She never questioned her experience or the power of God to save to the uttermost. When Alfred, in his early ministry, would suggest doubts and difficulties on the subject, she would reply, "My son can never gainsay his mother's experience," and pressing her hand to her heart she would say, "Ah, Alfred, I know, I know." He knew the great sorrow out of which this experience had lifted her. No wonder she could say, "This love of Christ is more to me than the love of ten husbands." The deep sorrow through which she passed prepared her for the beautiful ministry of consolation and love to which she was soon called. She proved an angel of mercy in the homes of sorrow which she visited.

Mrs. Cookman spent her last years with her youngest son, Rev. John E. Cookman, and her only daughter. "It gives an ideal completeness to her life," writes her son, "that God should permit her in these latter years to fulfill the hopes that were the dream of her girlhood."

Mrs. Cookman attributed her success in training her children to three things: "First, to the experience of entire sanctification; second, to the strict observance of the Sabbath; third, to the watchful care over her boys after nightfall." Looking up into his mother's face a few hours before his death, Alfred said: "Precious mother, next to the Lord Jesus, I owe everything to you. Your influence, your example, your counsel, your prayers, have made me what I am, as a man, a Christian, and a Christian minister." Such a testimony from a dying son to a loving mother is golden, and is worthy to hang about the neck of maternal memory forever.

About a year before her death, after a severe sickness, she received a deeper baptism of the Holy Spirit, and she gave herself and her children to God in a renewed consecration. She placed her trembling hands upon their heads and implored for them the grace which had been given her. From that time she lived as one who had nothing to do on earth but work for God, and wait for his coming. It was a year of clear testimony to the blood that cleanseth from all sin. To all persons, in all places, and at all times, she testified to the power of Christ to save to the uttermost. She would often say, "Claim all your privileges, claim all your privileges in Christ." Her language was: "Life or death, is all the same to me. I am ready to go when Jesus wants me."

Of her end, a loving hand has penned the following: "She had spent a happy hour late in the afternoon in the Church, looking at preparations for an evening entertainment. She allowed herself to be drawn to the piano, and played some of the airs she had learned in girlhood. She then spent her hour before tea, as usual, in meditation and reading. She left her marker in her Bible at Revelation, twenty-second chapter, the very end of the sacred book. Her Bible and her life ended together. Called to the tea-table, she had broken bread with those nearest to her, when her hands were lifted, and she would have fallen, but for loving arms which caught her and laid her gently down. She immediately went into a state of unconsciousness, a sweet sleep; no weariness, no distress, no pain. She lingered until Saturday morning, December 3, 1881, and at early dawn she went away. Without failure of faculties, in the midst of daily duties, without pain of prolonged suffering, without pangs of parting, in her own chamber, amid tender and sacred affection, her eyes closed on earth and opened in heaven." Thus lived and died the mother of Alfred Cookman. Her character has been summed up in the following beautiful characteristics:

"She was a woman of marked intellectual ability. Her letters were marvels of strength and beauty. Through all her life she was accustomed to have a favorite book by her side, and in her very last years she was fully abreast of the thought of the times, and with eagerness and zest read the most recent and able works of the best authors. She had a remarkably cheerful spirit. After the one great bereavement, no other grief had the power to depress. She had great capacity for enjoyment. All the good that came she took with unaffected thankfulness, and like good old Izaak Walton, as he angled by the streams of her native land, she could say, 'In every misery I miss, I see a new mercy.' She laughed merrily at what was mirthful, and her presence never cast a damper on any honest joy. Her magnetic power in attracting the young was unusual, and surrounded by happy groups of young people, she would seem, by her enthusiasm, and pleasure, to be the youngest of

them all. What was more striking was her perfect naturalness, especially in her Christian life. She was the embodiment of simplicity and godly sincerity. Her manners were charming and above affectation, yet she had a dignity which was quick, tender, and true. Hers was, indeed, a heart at leisure from itself to soothe and sympathize. While her tears were ready to flow at the recital of a story of misery and woe, her hand was no less quickly reached out in healing. She loved not in word only, but in deed and in truth. Her will was heroic, fearless, and mighty, and had it been unsanctified, would have been a power for evil; but washed in the blood of the Lamb, it became the strong and principled champion of righteousness.

"Over the natural virtues that strengthened her character, and the graces that ornamented it, was shed the pure and steady light of her religious faith. This, while adding freshness and beauty, so unified all, that it made her character one of wondrous symmetry." (Christian Advocate.)

Is it any wonder that, with such a mother, Alfred Cookman should have been the man he was?

Rev. John E. Cookman, youngest son of this good woman, a son greatly beloved, and with whom she spent her later years, died March 29, 1891. He was an eloquent and successful preacher. Rev. E. H. Stokes, in a little poem, describes him thus:

"Spirit meek, heart undefiled,  
Life as gentle as a child."

Some years before his death he, for some cause, left the Methodist, and united with the Protestant Episcopal Church. But it does not seem to have affected, unfavorably, his spirituality. Some extracts from a letter, written to a sister-in-law a few days before his death, will give the reader some idea of the state of his mind. He says "Why I have been shut away for almost a year from earnest Christian service, in saving men, and shut up to pain and distress, with daily and hourly entering into the valley of the shadow of death, I know not. He knoweth, and I am content to rest in his love. There have not only been physical upholdings, but marvelous manifestations of Divine grace and goodness as have made my poor heart a constant chime of golden bells to His praise and glory. Sometimes great baptisms of power, sweetness, and love have swept through my soul, and I have been unutterably filled with glory and with God. The sweet fragrance has lingered like a grace of the skies for days afterwards. Sometimes a strange, gentle, then quiet peace that passeth understanding, has passed over me. O such ineffable peace! O how I long with a heart-hunger once more to stand in the Church of Christ, and proclaim my dear Lord as an all-sufficient Savior!"

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Chapter 4 THE MANLY YOUTH AND FAMILY COUNSELOR

Alfred was accustomed to lean upon his father in everything and for everything. But now, mother, brothers, and sister all turn to him; and he, a boy of thirteen, takes the burden, leaning only on God. His mother says that this great affliction "brought out, in all their force and power, what

had been until now the germs of Alfred's character. He realized his position as the oldest of six children, and faithfully tried to fill up the chasm made by a wise though inscrutable Providence. Eternity alone will unfold all he was to his family as a son and a brother in the years of his minority."

Mr. George Cookman, his grandfather, writes to him from Hull about this time, saying to him, in the most tender manner: "I look to you, my dear Alfred, as an important coadjutor with your dear mother in forming the habits and character of your family; and it gives me inexpressible pleasure to learn, from your dear mother's letter, that there is every reason to hope that my expectations in this respect will be fully realized. Rest assured that you will be looked up to by the younger members of the family, and in setting them a good example, in cheerfully obliging your dear mother, in promptly and affectionately obeying her command, and in sympathizing with her under the pressure of family trials and bereavements, you will greatly lighten her burdens, alleviate her sufferings, and minister, in no inconsiderable degree, to her peace, comfort, and happiness."

He urges upon him, also, that he "pay unremitting attention to his education;" citing his father's example at his age, saying: "It was by adopting this course also that your dear Uncle Alfred became so distinguished, both at home among his friends, as well as when he was a student at the university. I trust their mantle will fall on you, my dear boy, and that you will emulate their talents and virtues."

In answer to this letter, Alfred thanks his grandfather for his kind advice, saying: "Rest assured that I shall always comply with the wishes of dear mother, and in every way in my power aim to make her happy."

While residing in Baltimore for the next few years, he was favored with the instructions of Messrs. Robert H. Pattison, Perley R. Lovejoy, and John H. Dashiell. These men he had known as students at Carlisle. He took prizes in Mr. Burleigh's school for elocution, for an essay on Simplicity, and for exercises in Latin. He delivered an oration on the Fourth of July which was very creditable for one of his years. He paid some attention to Greek.

While his mother was employed in Christian work, which often took her from home in the evening, Alfred would remain at home with the children, assisting them in their lessons, and conducting with them family devotions in his mother's absence.

At the early age of seventeen he seems to have evinced more or less familiarity with matters relating to Church and State, always placing himself squarely on the side of right, whether it related to the subject of slavery or temperance. It has been justly said that a "heart more responsive to the weal of the Nation and the Church never throbbed than in the bosom of Alfred Cookman."

In 1845, Mr. Cookman seemed to have commenced his life-work, but more as an evangelist than a preacher. In the Charles Street Church there was a body of young men, Alfred being the youngest of the number, who were moved with sympathy for a class of sailors who were confined to the waters of Chesapeake Bay, no one seeming to care for their souls. These young men rented a

small sail-loft, and opened it for religious service. Here they labored for the salvation of these seamen with success. Rev. S. Kramer gives an account of Alfred's first sermon. It was at the time he was aiding in these Bethel services. He says: "I felt a deep interest in Alfred, believing him called of God to the work. As a local preacher, I had appointments regularly, one of which was at Washington Factory, five miles out of the city. One Sabbath morning I asked Alfred to accompany me, and he consented. I said nothing to him about taking any part in the services until we were on the road; then in my carriage I entered into conversation with him on the subject of his call to the ministry. He admitted having a strong impression that way; but said his way was not open. He would let the Lord make his duty plain. I said somewhat abruptly, 'Alfred, you must preach for me today.' 'O no,' he replied, 'I have no license even to exhort, and it would not do.' I said: 'You must make a beginning, and I will take the responsibility. I feel that it will be right for you to do so.' When we arrived at the place of preaching, I took him and Brother Griffin, who accompanied us, into the pulpit, and made Alfred open the services. After singing and prayer, I handed him the Bible, telling him to select a text and go on, and I would pray for him, and Brother Griffin would follow. He was at length persuaded to stand up and announce a text, and preached his first sermon then and there, in his schoolboy jacket. It was a pleasant spring morning, and while I can not recall the exact words of the text, I remember distinctly the sermon was on the Christian warfare. God owned the word, and we were greatly blessed. When we returned to the city, and I drove to his home, his dear mother came out and met us, and when I told her what he had done, she said it was the fulfillment of her prayers and heart's desire."

Soon after this a young man belonging to the "Bethel Fraternity," after a protracted illness, passed away. His death was a signal triumph. The friends of the good man desired Alfred to prepare a funeral discourse, which he did, and delivered it in the lecture room of the Charles Street Church. This, his biographer, Dr. Ridgeway, says was his first sermon; but according to the statement of Rev. Mr. Kramer, it was not his first. There is no doubt that this second sermon was more carefully prepared, and delivered with a feeling and a style more impressive than his first, off-hand sermon before named. He seems to have been at that time modest in his manner and ardent in his feelings, as was always characteristic of him.

November 1, 1845, Alfred Cookman received a license as an exhorter in the Methodist Episcopal Church. This was done by the Charles Street Station, Baltimore. July 7, 1846, he received license by the same Church to preach. His license bears the signature of Rev. John A. Collins, presiding elder. Mr. Collins affirmed that Alfred was more proficient in his examination than any other young man who had ever come before him for license.

He is said to have been at this time quite proficient in Latin, Greek, German, and French; but "humility and timidity were his peculiar characteristics, which kept him from anything like display or assumption."

Alfred decided to enter upon his lifework as an itinerant Methodist preacher. The family decided to remove to Philadelphia, and make that their future home. It was the Conference that George G. Cookman first joined; it was in a free State, and everything combined to make it a most desirable residence for the family. Alfred had desired to unite with the Philadelphia Conference. He had already been invited by Rev. James McFarland, presiding elder of the Conference, to supply the place of Rev. D. D. Lore, who had been appointed missionary to Buenos Aires. He

accepted the invitation, and after the family was comfortably settled, he started for his appointment. It was no small sacrifice for Alfred Cookman to leave his mother and the other members of his family. But, believing that God called, he mounted his faithful "Gerry," and was on his way to Attleboro Circuit, under charge of Rev. James Hand, presiding elder. Of his departure he says: "Quitting one of the happiest homes to enter the itinerant work, my excellent mother remarked upon the threshold of my departure, 'My son, if you would be supremely happy or supremely useful in your work, you must be an entirely sanctified servant of Jesus.' My mother's passing but pointed remark followed me like a good angel, as I moved to and fro in my first sphere in itinerant life."

On this first circuit, though deprived of many of the comforts he had enjoyed, he shrank from no duty, submitted joyfully to all the hardships of that hilly country. He became very sick. "Debility and pain," he says, "seemed to have seized my entire system, and I was sick, very sick;" but, through the mercy of God, he soon recovered and was at his work again.

The Philadelphia Conference held its session in 1847, in Wilmington, Delaware. Bishop Hamline presided. Alfred Cookman made application for admission to the Conference. The Conference was so full that the bishop recommended that they receive none on trial, and the Conference so voted. This was a great disappointment to Alfred; but he accepted it as the order of Providence, and consented to serve another year under the presiding elder. He was employed by Rev. Daniel Lambdin, on the Delaware City Circuit. Robert McNarmee was preacher-in-charge. This circuit proved to be much more agreeable to the young itinerant than Attleboro Circuit. The people were more intelligent, and their homes more inviting. He had no permanent home; but stayed around among the people as it was agreeable. He was received most cordially and listened to as a messenger from God.

In the spring of 1848, Alfred applied again for admission to the Conference, and was received as a probationer, and appointed to Germantown Circuit, including Chestnut Hill. We have now followed Alfred Cookman from his childhood until his union with the Philadelphia Conference, at the age of twenty years. We must now proceed to consider him, not so much in detail, as to present the marked characteristics of his life, which will include much of detail.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 5 THE GREAT SALVATION EXPERIENCED

We have spoken of Alfred's conversion at Carlisle at the age of ten years, under the ministry of his father, and of his full reclamation at a camp-meeting near Washington, D. C. We are now to consider that added work, known as entire sanctification, which, in all his subsequent life, was the sun of his soul, the continual theme of his ministry, and the splendor of his remarkable career. Alfred Cookman was not a genius, and will never go down to posterity as such; he was not a profoundly intellectual character; he will never be known as possessed of a towering intellect. He was not a great theologian, nor a master of science or philosophy, though he possessed a beautiful mind, a clear and strong intellect. He did not possess the power of eloquence, like a Summerfield, a Maffitt, or even his own honored father. Yet he was not defective in these



excellences; but he will live in the Church, and the fragrance of his life will go down to the latest generation as a saintly character, whose life was a constant testimony that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

While on his first circuit -- Attleboro -- he says, "I frequently felt to yield myself to God, and pray for the grace of entire sanctification." But it seemed, so high as not to be reached by him, and, if obtained, it could not be retained. "My besetments and trials are such," he says, "I could not successfully maintain so lofty a position." A new church had been erected at Newtown, one of his principal appointments on his first circuit, and the services of that saintly man, Bishop Hamline, were secured to dedicate it. After the dedication, the bishop and his devoted wife remained for some days, the bishop preaching frequently, and always with an unction which moved the heart of Alfred. The good bishop and his wife took occasion to converse with him on his religious experience, and urged him to seek the higher Christian life, and at once. In speaking of the bishop, he says: "His gentle and yet dignified bearing, devotional spirit, beautiful Christian example, unctuous manner, divinely illuminated face, apostolic labors, and fatherly counsels made a profound impression on my mind and heart. I heard him as one sent from God. His influence, so hallowed and blessed, has not only remained with me ever since, but even seems to increase as I pass along in my sublunary pilgrimage."

At the close of an afternoon sermon, in which the bishop urged the people to seize the present opportunity to do what they, as believers, had often desired, resolved, and promised to do; viz., "yield themselves to God, as those who were alive from the dead," and from that hour trust constantly in Jesus as a Savior -- as their Savior from all sin -- Alfred was among the number who said, "I will, by the help of the Almighty Spirit, I will," and kneeling, he says, "I brought an entire consecration to the altar -- Christ." He perceived clearly the difference between the consecration now required, and that made at conversion. Then he brought powers, as he says, "dead in trespasses and sins;" now he brings powers that are permeated with the new life of regeneration, so that the sacrifice became a living sacrifice." Then he seemed to mass his offering, and give himself away, not fully understanding what was embraced in such surrender, simply saying:

"Here, Lord, I give myself away;  
'Tis all that I can do."

Now, with clear light, "it was more intelligent, specific, and careful, embracing hands, feet, senses, attributes of heart and mind, time, reputation, kindred, worldly sustenance -- everything." Then he was "anxious for pardon;" now "for purity and the conscious presence of the Sanctifier in his heart." With this consecration; carefully made, he says; "I covenanted with my own heart, and with my Heavenly Father, that this entire, but unworthy, offering should remain upon the altar, and that henceforth I would please God, by believing that the altar -- Christ -- sanctified the gift." The effect which followed was a "broad, deep, full, satisfying, sacred peace," proceeding not only from the testimony of a good conscience before God, but from the presence of the Spirit in the heart." But with this evidence he could not say that he was fully sanctified, only that he was set apart unto God. The following day, in company with Bishop and Mrs. Hamline, he ventured to tell them what he had done; and in the act of confessing, he realized a degree of light and strength. Prayer was proposed, and while they were kneeling, he says, "God, for Christ's sake, gave me the Holy Spirit as I had never received him before, so that I was constrained to confess:

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

The great work of sanctification, for which I had so often hoped and prayed, was wrought in me -- even me. I could not doubt it. The evidence in my case was as direct and indubitable as the witness of my sonship, received at the time of my adoption into the family of heaven. O, it was glorious, Divinely glorious!"

This experience inaugurated a new epoch in the life of Alfred Cookman. "Rest in Jesus, an abiding assurance of purity through the blood of the Lamb, conscious union and communion with God, increased power, not only to do, but to suffer the will of God, delight in the Master's service, fear of grieving the Holy Spirit, love for and a desire to be with the entirely sanctified, joy in religious conversation, comfort and freedom in prayer, illumination in the perusal of the sacred Word, increased unction in the performance of public duties, -- these were among the blessed fruits of this new life."

Sad as it may seem, this delightful state of mind continued for only eight short weeks, when the fullness of the Comforter was withdrawn. And this is the sad experience of multitudes of those who profess this grace. With some it is one thing, with others, another. The Spirit of God, by whom we are sanctified, is a jealous Spirit, easily grieved and driven from the heart. The saintly John Fletcher lost this experience four or five times, before he became established in the grace of complete redemption. With Alfred Cookman, it was on this wise. During the session of his first Conference, he found himself associated with a company of joking, story-telling ministers, of whom there are vastly too many for the honor of the Master whom they profess to serve. Being young in experience, and forgetting how easily the Spirit is grieved, he allowed himself to be drawn into the tide, and found himself indulging in trifling conversation. As he returned from Conference to his new field of labor, he became conscious of a loss of spiritual power. Instead of coming with humble confession at once to the blood of cleansing for immediate forgiveness and restoration, he lost his way, and for several years lived without the blessing, which had filled him with so much delight.

It is not uncommon that good men, losing this experience, fall into great errors with respect to the doctrine of entire sanctification. This was the case with Alfred Cookman. To satisfy his conscience, he tells us that he accepted the dogma that sanctification, as a work of the Holy Spirit, could not involve an experience distinct from regeneration. We do not speak unadvisedly when we aver that two-thirds of those who claim to hold and advocate this, as most believe, unscriptural dogma, once professed to enjoy the sanctifying grace of God as a work subsequent to regeneration. They first lost the enjoyment of heart purity, and without its true light to guide them they have wandered about for a time in the dark, scarcely knowing what to believe, and have finally accepted this dogma, as some would say, a little better than nothing -- a dogma which Mr. Wesley persistently resisted during his entire ministry -- and have by it sought to satisfy their hungry souls. But some, like Alfred Cookman, have returned.

Of these years, Alfred Cookman says: "O, how many precious years I wasted in quibbling and debating respecting theological differences! not seeing that I was antagonizing a doctrine that must be 'spiritually discerned,' and the tendency of which is manifestly to bring people nearer to God."

It was during these sad years of Alfred's life that he, like many who lose their religious enjoyment, contracted the habit of smoking, which very generally saps the foundation of piety, and keeps thousands, as it did him, from the fountain of cleansing. It was to him a very great temptation. Though he manufactured excuses for the indulgence, he felt that the practice was costing him too much in the matter of his religious enjoyment. After all his reasonings and quibblings, he found a lack of spiritual life. His experience, he says, "was not steady, round, full, or abiding."

The friends of holiness insisted on three steps, which to him seemed reasonable: 1. Entire sanctification; 2. Acceptance of Jesus, moment by moment, as a perfect Savior; 3. A meek but definite confession of the grace received. Then, his Newtown experience, which had not fully passed from his memory, supplied an overwhelming confirmation of what seemed so reasonable, and at the same time furnished a powerful stimulus to the performance of the duty. He finally resolved to cast aside all preconceived theories, doubtful indulgences, culpable unbelief, and return to the "Mighty to save." He again rededicated himself to God, surrendered the doubtful indulgence -- tobacco -- and accepted Christ as the Savior from all sin, and again claimed the witness of the Spirit to his entire sanctification. On doing this, all the bliss of his former experience returned, and he was enabled to walk in the King's "highway of holiness," conscious that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleansed him from all unrighteousness." Ten years later, he says: "I have been walking in the light as God is in the light. I have fellowship with the saints, and humbly testify that the blood of Jesus cleanseth me from all sin."

Walking one day with a friend, they passed two distinguished ministers, one of whom was smoking. Alfred remarked: "I can understand how that brother enjoys that cigar. I used to enjoy it as he does. I was very fond of it, especially after my day's work was done. It was so quieting to my nervous system to rest in my easy chair, with my cigar for my companion. And I gave it up for Jesus' sake. I remember I told Jesus how soothing to me this delicate narcotic was, and that it had occurred to me that it was a doubtful indulgence. And yet I did not know but I needed it. Jesus told me in that hour that he would supply all my need; that he would soothe me, and quiet me, and rest me after my labor, and I gave up the indulgence from that hour. And since that time, never can I tell what Jesus has been to me, as I have sat in my arm-chair to rest when wearied and alone with him. He has been my rest."

From the hour that Alfred Cookman rededicated himself to God, and received again the witness of heart purity, to the time that he ended his glorious career, he never wavered in his faith, never faltered in his testimony to the power of Jesus' blood to cleanse him from all sin. But for his experience and advocacy of the doctrine of entire sanctification, Alfred Cookman would never have been known and revered the world around as the "most sacred" of men. His eloquence would have been forgotten, his pleasing manner and winning address would have ceased to be remembered. But his holy life, his gentle, earnest, unaffected character is an inspiration to the Church in its struggles for freedom from sin, and must ever be till "Jesus comes to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired of all them that believe."

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 6

### NATURAL GRACES AND HOLY LIFE

Alfred Cookman was well born. He inherited a natural dignity not common to most men. There was a beauty in his form, an elegance and an ease in his manner, a natural dignity in his deportment which were not artificial, not put on, but purely natural, and which made him a marked personage. There is no doubt that his "fine physical fiber had much to do with the delicacy of his feelings." He was the farthest removed from any form of affectation, and "there was nothing human which was foreign to him." He was in height five feet nine inches, and well proportioned. He had a full, round chest, a head of medium size. His hair was rich, glossy black, his eyes gray, large and full, not piercing, but lustrous. His nose was straight, his mouth wide, lips moderately full, his chin round and smoothly-shaven. The whole face impressed the intelligent observer that he was in the presence of a man of marked trustworthiness. His fresh, ruddy, clear complexion, his firm, sinewy step, his erect carriage, all combined to make him a marked man.

To clothe this fine personality with the beauty of holiness was to raise him to a dignity, not angelic, but graciously sacred. Bishop Foster pronounced him "the most sacred man I have ever known."

It is one thing to experience the grace of entire sanctification, and quite another thing to exemplify the beauty of holiness in the life.

It is doubtful if any man of modern times has manifested this rich experience in so extraordinary a manner as Rev. John Fletcher, of Madeley, England. One not in sympathy with his teachings, and who had felt the keen edge of his Damascus blade, the Rev. Henry Venn, writing to Dr. Stillingfleet, says: "I was for six weeks in the home with the extraordinary and very excellent Mr. Fletcher. O that I might be like him! I do assure you that I strictly observed him for six weeks, and never heard him speak anything but what was becoming as a pastor of Christ's Church; not a single unbecoming word of himself, nor of his antagonists, nor of his friends. All his conversation tended to excite to greater love and thankfulness for the benefits of redemption, while his whole deportment breathed humility and love. We had many conversations. I told him most freely that I was shocked at many things in his 'Checks,' and pointed them out to him. We widely differ about the efficacy of Christ's death, the nature of justification, and the perfection of the saints; but I believe we could live years together in great love."

Mr. Fletcher won greater victories by his life than by his logic, though the latter has done much to establish believers in the faith of free and full redemption.

Alfred Cookman did more by his life than by his pen or voice. No one could be in his presence for any considerable time but would be forced to say, as Henry Venn said of Mr. Fletcher, "O that I might be like him!"

His holiness was not simply external, not manufactured for the occasion. There was no attempt to appear sanctimonious in any way above others. It was all of grace, and really spontaneous. He seemed the most natural of men. His very countenance was an index to his heart. He seemed to impress all who came in contact with him. "I never come into his presence," said one of his official members, "without going away a better man. He seems to captivate everybody with whom he comes in contact." Rev. R. P. Smith says: "He lived Christ, and reflected the beauty of the Man Christ Jesus as much as I can conceive of any human being doing." "I do not think that I was ever in his company, even for five minutes, without feeling painfully my own deficiencies and being deeply stirred to follow him as he so manifestly followed Christ. I always left him to seek more of the grace and power of God in my soul. Yet he was gentle as a child, and seemed, in his simplicity and genuine love, to make each one feel that he was the object of his special affection." He claimed to possess the abiding Comforter constantly, and no one with whom he associated ever questioned that he possessed all that he professed.

Writing to Rev. M. C. Briggs, he said: "I am wonderfully enjoying my home in the heart of the Lord Jesus. My life, as I humbly trust, is hid with Christ in God. This locates me at the secret source of every blessed thing."

Writing to a friend in Wilmington, Delaware, about the same time, he says: "In the life of faith I have been constantly associated with the Lord Jesus, and he has been ever ruling all for my spiritual advantage. When I left my Wilmington friends, whom I loved so tenderly, he gave me to realize that I might not quit for a moment his blessed side. When I was without a home, he sweetly reminded me of my permanent mansion that he is arranging for my enjoyment. When I had the trial of meeting and preaching to a strange people, he kindly whispered, 'Lo, I am with you alway,' and then vindicated his encouraging truth. When I sat down in our present comfortable abode, I said, 'All this is of God.' I love the Infinite Giver more for his unmerited and multiplied gifts. And thus my unsettlement, and then my settlement again, have both been pressed into the service and redounded to the advantage of my higher spiritual nature."

"It was Martin Luther who said: 'God dwells in Salem rather than in Babylon.' Bless his holy name! He makes my heart 'Salem,' and then he himself abides in the midst of his sacred quiet and satisfying place. His precious voice, still small and sweet, could not be heard amid the confusion of Babylon; but O! in this Salem of peace we listen, and hear him only speak!"

These utterances tell of his conscious and perpetual abiding in "the secret place of the Most High."

Rev. Mr. Ballard says of him: "The atmosphere of the atonement was the residence of his spirit. He was my conception of a hero -- modest, unassuming, unpretentious. He was yet firm as a rock where his convictions were at stake. In his position regarding the doctrine of personal holiness this was eminently true. It cost him small sacrifices, to which he never alluded; it risked a popularity, which was eminent; but none of these things moved him; calmly and unpretentiously he avowed his convictions, and pressed the doctrine everywhere, never underestimating his brethren who differed from him, and never withdrawing the warmth of his attachment on this account. Such a man is a hero, and such a hero was Alfred Cookman."

Bishop Simpson spoke of him, at his funeral, as having been twice his pastor, once in Pittsburgh, and then in Philadelphia: "Years ago he was the pastor of my family in Pittsburgh, and my children became attached to him as their friend. And since we have been in the city of Philadelphia he was again our pastor, and I saw him go in and out. He stood by the dying bed of one I loved, and his words and counsels were those of a Christian minister. I say that during all the time I knew him, I never heard one word or saw the manifestation of any spirit inconsistent with the highest forms of the Christian life. In the pulpit, and out of it, at the fireside, or wherever he was, a faithful, pious leader of the people and follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, himself deeply devoted, he was very anxious to see the higher type of religion prevailing in the Church, and very often his theme was Christian holiness. I think, as he stands before the Throne, he does not regret that so often his theme was, 'Be ye holy, for I am holy.' I rejoice to say, he taught only the doctrine which a happy experience and godly life justify."

These words seemed carefully chosen, and were uttered with the deepest feeling. And as we listened to them, they appeared to us wise and truthful. The vast crowd to which they were addressed gave evidence, by their deep emotion and tearful countenances, that they regarded them as eminently fitted to describe the character of their friend and brother.

Rev. Thomas M. Eddy, said: "He was the saintliest man I have ever known."

One of his loving parishioners said of him: "The basis of his character, so beautifully developed and maintained, was an unwavering faith in God, and a sincere love and genuine sympathy for his fellow men. His character and, life afforded a beautiful example of that entire self-consecration which was his special ministry to preach."

Rev. Andrew Longacre, his lifelong friend, says: "To many of us he was what Tennyson calls his friend:

'The sweetest soul  
That ever looked through human eyes.'

I need not remind you that his experience" (of holiness) "had in it nothing of self-exaltation. He never failed to disclaim all goodness in or from himself; but he rejoiced always, and with an exultant faith, in the power of the blood of Jesus to cleanse him from all sin.

"His own faith and experience never seemed to separate him from others who did not think or feel as he did. No one felt at a distance from him by reason of his holiness. It was a holiness that attracted, not that repelled. Men might, if they pleased, oppose his arguments with doubts and objections; they might turn away from his burning appeals; but no one could question the living purity of the man, the practical embodiment of holiness in his life."

Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, says: "Rev. Alfred Cookman's life comes back to me like the sound of a church bell embowered in trees on a June day. It was nothing so much I heard him say, or anything I ever saw him do, that so impressed me as himself. He was the grace of God impersonated, and the more I saw him the more I loved him. To be with him was to be blessed."

Rev. E. Wentworth, says: "His devotion was a living flame; his example a shining light; his influence a genial glow; his eloquence genuine; his zeal the offspring of his deepest convictions -- unsparing."

Rev. James M. Lightbourne says: "Alfred Cookman was the best model of a Methodist preacher I ever saw."

We could fill pages with such testimonials to the unexampled holiness in the life of Alfred Cookman. The great Church, of which he was a most distinguished member in all her branches, has conceded this, and the Church Universal has freely admitted that he was as holy as it falls to the lot of mortals to be in this world of sin and woe. But it must not be understood that, as holy as Alfred Cookman was, he was in any sense an ascetic. To him holiness was not of the cloister type. It did not consist in the wearing of iron girdles, or walking with gravel in one's shoes, or climbing up Pilate's staircase on one's naked knees. He was the farthest removed from external acts which gave the least coloring to the idea that he expected salvation in any other way than by faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ.

Alfred Cookman enjoyed life. He took a deep interest in everything about him. He could join in a hearty laugh with his friends, and be religiously merry with little children. Repulsive, sour godliness found no place in his experience. If he saw an honest soul drifting into extravagance and towards fanaticism, or one of a moody spirit excluding himself from society, he was always ready to win him back to real life and its enjoyments. We insert here a letter to a young lady, who had shown marked signs of drifting in such a direction. In the kindest words he says:

"Walking myself, as I humbly trust, in the light of full salvation, I am greatly delighted to know that you are a youthful pilgrim in the King's pathway of holiness. I believe it is your first aim to do your duty and enjoy your privilege. Living thus, you will walk in the light; aye, your path will shine more and more unto the perfect day. I gathered from some things your father said, that in your zeal you are taxing too seriously your powers, both of mind and body. Now, I know that you are gentle and teachable, willing to accept and be influenced by the advice of one who was a former pastor, and who feels very tenderly towards every member of your dear family. I have lived longer than you, and have special opportunities for larger observation, and hence you will believe me when I say it is not well to dwell exclusively on any one subject, or to keep our thoughts and energies turned in but one direction. The mind is so constituted by our Heavenly Father that it is healthiest when it passes from one object to another. While, therefore, to get good and to do good must be matters of primary importance, still, for the sake of your mind, and body, and piety, and usefulness, there must be a frequent change, an occasional let-up. You must think of other objects. You must read the papers and books of biography and history. You must mingle with your friends, and enjoy innocently social intercourse. You must take a good deal of exercise, and enjoy the beauties of nature and art that you may come in contact with. You must not allow the enemy to get astride of your conscience, and ride you to death. Remember that our Heavenly Father means that his children shall be not only the best, but the happiest children in all the world. Get innocent joy from all earthly sources, and you will be better prepared to obtain riches and more satisfactory joy from himself. Think of these things. I do not want you to break down in health, for then your good would be evil spoken of. Holiness will have in that case to bear the burden or reproach. God bless you; you are his dear child. Accept and act upon these practical suggestions.

"From your Christian brother,  
"Alfred Cookman."

What could be more tender, wise, and practical than these suggestions to a profoundly sincere soul, whom Satan had deluded with the idea that she must exclude herself from the world, in order to convince the world of the beauty of holiness. There are no unkind thrusts, no condemnation of her course, no hard names, but a gentle and tender persuasion to hold fast her profession; only changing some aspects of her life for Christ's sake and the cause of holiness. If ministers were to adopt this method with those whom they judge to be drifting from the right way, and do it in the spirit of Alfred Cookman, what untold troubles might be avoided!

It was not Alfred Cookman in the pulpit, on the platform, at the camp-meetings; it was Alfred Cookman himself; it was the hallowed savor of his life, the very atmosphere of holiness in which he moved, that impressed those about him, and made him the living example of all he did and said.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 7

### ARDENT LOVE FOR AMERICAN BONDMEN

It is a noticeable fact that children seldom, if ever, have prejudices against persons of the colored race. In their childish sports they seem to know no difference.

Alfred Cookman, when less than five years of age, at the time his father traveled a circuit on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, became greatly attached to slave children, as we have seen in these pages. He seems to have possessed a special affection for them. At a little later period, when his father was stationed in Alexandria, Virginia, he came in contact with a more repulsive form of this unchristian institution. Here he came face to face with slave-pens and auction-blocks and broken-hearted bondmen. He saw parents and children behind prison bars, waiting in deepest anguish for the hour when they were to be separated, never more to meet on earth. These heart-rending scenes made a deep and lasting impression upon young Cookman, and induced in him a hatred for the system of American slavery which time could never efface. His subsequent residence in Baltimore, after his father's death, did not modify his deep hatred of the system.

When the time came for him to decide what Conference he would join, he chose the Philadelphia in preference to the Baltimore, because the former was in a free State. But he found, subsequently, that the Philadelphia was a border Conference, and many of its members were more or less in sympathy with their brethren across the border.

When, in 1844, the great struggle by which the Methodist Church was rent asunder took place, Mr. Cookman was but sixteen years of age, and residing in Baltimore. It was not to be expected that he would enter into the merits of the conflict. But even at that early age he was a keen observer of what was transpiring in Church and State.



While Mr. Cookman was pastor of the Union Church, Philadelphia, the "irrepressible conflict," as it was called, between slavery and freedom, "was fast approaching a crisis." A storm was gathering, and it was about to burst on the Methodist Episcopal Church. A hostility, the most bitter existed. Love had given place to hate. The North was arrayed against the South, and the South against the North, and no one was able to suggest a cure for our troubles.

Many of the leading members of the Church claimed that there should be a rule passed by the General Conference, requiring slaveholding members to emancipate their slaves, and they believed that by such an action the State could be finally reached. There was great diversity of opinion on the subject, especially in the border Conferences, of which Philadelphia was one.

Alfred Cookman was one of the men who believed that such a rule should be adopted and enforced. Measures were inaugurated to secure such a change by a proper constitutional process. Mr. Cookman believed it to be right, and was ready to give it his most hearty support. In his own Conference, of some three hundred members, all but five or six were against him. Perhaps no single act in Cookman's life gave evidence of greater moral heroism than this. He was young and popular, and was really the idol of the Conference. In the matter of standing and reputation in the Conference, he had everything to lose, and nothing to gain. But principle was more to him than popularity. Many of his ardent friends and admirers were in the South, where he had been educated, and these friends were, many of them, slaveholders. To vote for this measure was virtually to declare these persons sinners, and yet he believed that many of them were lovers of Jesus, and that he should meet them in heaven. But Alfred Cookman believed that stern duty required him to support the measure. And without questioning the piety or virtue of the people who were involved in slaveholding, he must do his duty. The favored opportunity had come for action, and he must stand firm to his principles, or prove a traitor to his most profound convictions of duty. If any one has ever imagined that Alfred Cookman was weak, yielding too much to the prejudices of others in matters where he should have stood firm, let them mark his action on this occasion.

Dr. Ridgeway, referring to this action, says: "Cutting away from all social and personal entanglements, the man stood forth in an act of moral heroism seldom surpassed in the history of Methodism. When the resolutions initiating the change were pending before the Conference, he got down upon his knees in the pew, and, bathed in tears, poured out his soul to God for light and strength, and arose and voted Aye." That was courage worthy of the name. He might, as some have done in like circumstances, retired from the Conference, and thus avoided the responsibility and saved his reputation. But Alfred Cookman was not of that make-up. The sole question with him was, What is duty? That question settled, nothing could stand between him and its performance. This is the stuff of which martyrs are made. An honest slaveholder would have said the act was worthy of the noble man he was.

The General Conference met in Buffalo, May 1, 1860. Mr. Cookman was anxious to be present. With several members of his own Conference, he attended. They were full of interest to see how the battle went. Writing to his wife from the seat of the Conference, he said: "Great excitement obtains among all concerned in General Conference proceedings. The anti-slavery column stands strong and united. May God rule and overrule!" "Today the slavery battle commenced. The excitement is intense. Comb led off, followed by Moody and Norval Wilson. The

Baltimoreans are here in large numbers. They are intensely excited. The General Rule will not be changed; but there will be a secession on the border. I judge we are in perilous times; but the Lord reigneth. If I were not conscientious before God, the pressure of friends might move me from my position; but while I would not grieve them, I must and will cling to truth and right."

The conflict in the General Conference, and his deep interest in it, did not ruffle his spirit. He says: "My spiritual enjoyment in Buffalo has been unusual. Love fills my heart; love for God and for all around. O, I feel during every succeeding hour that I am at peace with Heaven, and prepared, if it should be the Master's will, to quit these stormy scenes, and rest with angels and the glorified!" This was the spirit in which Mr. Cookman engaged in the moral conflicts of his times.

In 1862, when the war-cloud was thick and threatening, Mr. Cookman was on a visit to his native town, Lancaster, Pa. While there he addressed the citizens of the town in a patriotic speech of thrilling interest. Among other things, he said: "in the language of old John Adams, 'Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my heart and my hand' to these Union measures. It is my living sentiment, and, with the blessing of God, it will be my dying sentiment, 'Liberty and the Union now, liberty and Union forever.'"

The entire address was replete with the noblest patriotic sentiments. He urged that the war should be prosecuted until every rebel voice was hushed, and the "Stars and Stripes" waved over a united country.

The New York Conference, of which he was a member, met in New York City, and excitement was at a high pitch. Two events had transpired which had contributed to that excitement. A member of the Conference, Rev. Pelatiah Ward, had enlisted in the service, and had been killed. The President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, had issued the "Proclamation of Emancipation," the justice of which was questioned by some, and the policy of the act was questioned by others. Mr. Cookman prepared the war report, the reading of which produced a profound sensation in the body. It was a time of great excitement. The report had the true patriotic ring. It contained ten resolutions, covering the entire field. The fourth was a strong arraignment of certain parties in and out of the Church. It says:

"That the conduct of those who, influenced by political affinities or Southern sympathies, and under a pretext of discriminating between the Administration and the Government, throw themselves in the path of almost every warlike measure, is in our view covert treason, which has the malignity without the manliness of those who arrayed themselves in open hostilities to our liberties, kind is deserving of our sternest denunciation and our most determined opposition." The fifth resolution says: "That slavery is an evil, incompatible in its spirit and practice with the principles of Christianity, with republican institutions, with the peace and prosperity of our country, and with the traditions, doctrines, and Discipline of our Church; and that our long and anxious inquiry, 'What shall be done for its extirpation?' has been signally answered by Divine Providence, which has given to Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, the power and the disposition to issue a Proclamation guaranteeing the boon of freedom to millions of Southern bondmen."

No one doubted as to where Alfred Cookman's heart palpitated at this time. The report was adopted, with but slight opposition.

It was during Mr. Cookman's pastorate at Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, New York, that he had his army experience. He was ready to do as well as talk. Under the direction of the Christian Commission he went to the front, and for the usual period of such service he wrought valiantly in the Army of the Potomac. He shunned no danger, avoided no responsibility. His chief object seemed to be to win men to God. Many souls were genuinely converted. Reference is made to his work in the army in another part of this volume, to which we refer the reader. His letters from the army, addressed to his wife and others, breathe the same spirit of holy ardor and quenchless love of souls.

At the close of the war, Mr. Cookman would settle the "National Problem of Reconstruction," by giving the Freedmen the "spelling-book, the Bible, equal rights before the law, and the elective franchise as their weapons of defense, and then leave all the rest to God." Nothing could have been more in harmony with justice and right. The slave was free. That was all. He had nothing. and needed everything. Many of the advocates of freedom were in doubt as to the best thing to do. Alfred Cookman did not share in these doubts. He believed that the act of emancipation was an act inspired by God, and it was now for us to do our duty, and all would be right. An extract or two from a letter, written to his sister Mary, will set forth his views on this subject fully, and with these we will conclude this chapter:

Mr. Cookman says: "Last night I made a speech in the largest colored church in Philadelphia; two bishops, a book agent, a missionary, an editor, etc. (all black), on the platform. Justice to the Freedman and justice to the traitor, was my political creed announced; duty to their brethren in the South, the exhortation urged. We had a glorious time. I thought of our honored father; how he would have reveled and kindled and flamed on such an occasion, or under such circumstances.

"This suggests your inquiry respecting colonization. My impression is that colonization belongs to some future Providential development. God is using the African race just now to teach us lessons of justice, and can not dispense with the lesson book. When we are disposed to do justly in every particular, then I rather expect Providence will open some gold-mines or oil-wells, or something else, on the African coast, or in some other locality, where black people can best live, and so we shall work out the problem of colonization. At the present time they are not only important for testing our integrity, but also for cultivating our soil. I think that colonization must be left to Providence and the colored people themselves. We can not force them away. It would be unwise, unkind, and unchristian. Let us live for the present, faithfully discharging the duties of the present hour, which is to educate and elevate the people whose unrequited labors, multiplied wrongs, tedious bondage, and deep degradation give them a special claim upon us. Give them the spelling-book, the Bible, equal rights before the law, the elective franchise as their weapons of defense, and then leave all the rest to God. In such a case I would implicitly trust Providence; One who is himself infinitely just, holy, and good."

We doubt if this vexed question, "What shall be done with the black man?" has ever been more clearly answered in harmony with what are the dictates of Christianity than by Alfred Cookman.

Cookman Institute, Jacksonville, Florida, established for the education of Freedmen, was named in honor of Alfred Cookman, the lifelong friend and defender of the colored race.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 8

### ALFRED COOKMAN, A MODEL FAMILY MAN

Mr. Cookman was no mystic, seeking to attenuate and exhaust the body in order to develop the inner spiritual life. He was no ascetic, devoting himself to solitary contemplation; no hermit or recluse, in cave or monastery, shut out from all earthly attractions, practicing extreme mortification, that he might enjoy greater union with God, and build himself up in holiness.

There have been persons of extraordinary piety, who have denied themselves the pleasures of the married life, believing it detrimental to the highest form of communion with God. The Rev. John Fletcher for many years was deterred from taking this step, influenced by such considerations. He finally saw his error, and concluded that if Enoch, at the head of a family, was fit for translation, it was not a subject to be lightly esteemed, and he subsequently married.

Alfred Cookman, a man of extraordinary devotion to God, seems never to have been influenced by such unscriptural vagaries. He entered upon this God-ordained relation, not without a profound sense of its most sacred character, and of the obligations it involved. He possessed all the natural instincts of human nature, controlled by super-abounding grace, making him, in all respects, a model family man. His holiness shone as brightly in the family as in the pulpit.

Alfred Cookman was united in marriage, March 6, 1851, to Miss Annie B. Bruner, daughter of Mr. Abraham Bruner, of Columbia, Pennsylvania. He had spent some months previous to his marriage, on a voyage to England, to visit his aged grandfather. He seems to have been delighted with his visit, as his correspondence to his friends abundantly shows.

In a letter addressed to Miss Bruner, previous to their marriage, he says: "In the matter of marriage, above all others, I have been desirous that God should rule and overrule; indeed, I have incorporated this in my private addresses to the Throne of Grace. In looking back upon the past, I think I am prepared to say, 'He hath done all things well,' and in all my associations with you can most distinctly perceive the hand of an overruling Providence. I desire to be unfeignedly grateful to my Heavenly Father for this and all other manifestations of his tender care and watchful love, and in the strength of grace would solemnly promise him to be more devoted to his glorious cause in all future time."

There can be no doubt that the union between these two young hearts was as tender, loving, and unchanging as ever fell to the lot of souls to enjoy. The wife was a helpmeet to her husband. For twenty-one years they walked together in love, and then the parting came. On the completion of

the first ten years of their married life, Alfred makes this record: "On the 6th of March, 1851, I linked my fortunes with those of my dearly-beloved wife, and now, on the tenth anniversary of our blessed union, I would record my gratitude to Almighty God, whose kind providence gave and hath preserved to me one so well deserving the name of 'helpmeet.' Our life, made up of fidelity and love, has been like a deepening and widening stream, upon which we have floated together in delightful harmony. Our home, with its five little buds of beauty and promise, has been an Eden-spot, where our Infinite Father, who dwelt with the first pair in Paradise, has vouchsafed us his constant presence. O, how much of pure love and true joy have been compressed within these ten years of my life! Accept, my precious Annie, this humble but sincere testimony to your thoughtful care, constant kindness, unsullied goodness, untiring fidelity, and uninterrupted, yea, increasing devotion.

"We have lived and loved together thus long, and now, on this anniversary, let us, in token of our gratitude to God and our affection for one another, build a pillar of witness. It shall be composed of these ten stones, one for each year of our married life: Love, truth, purity, kindness, fidelity, sincerity, constancy, thankfulness, holiness, Christ the Cornerstone. This is the altar upon which we will renew our vows, to love, comfort, honor, and keep one another so long as we both shall live."

Mr. Cookman's letters to his wife breathe the spirit of purest affection, and his references to his children are of genuine fatherly tenderness. Writing to his wife, from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, he says: "In this world of insincere profession, and mere external manifestation, it is delightful to know there is one warm, true heart in which you may confidently repose. The genuineness of your love I have never questioned for an instant, and, next to the Pearl of Great Price, I prize it as the most precious of my heart's jewels. Be sure it is not foolishly expended. I am glad that our dear boys continue so well. They are two beautiful, blessed children, for whom we ought to be profoundly thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift." Writing again from the same place, he says: "Here I am at my study table again, attending to correspondence and other matters. O that you were at my side! O that I could look around and see the faces of my beautiful boys. All is desolation," he says, "in your absence." He seems never to be so happy as when wife and children were all about him, and he entering into the innocent enjoyments of his family life.

From Pittsburgh, writing to his absent wife, he says: "I wonder how you all are this evening. I think of you almost constantly, and am happiest when I can bask in the refreshing radiance of your sunny faces."

These are expressions of domestic affection of rare excellence. They show that he was a most tender and devoted husband and father.

Writing to his mother, he says, "The children exhibit every day some new charm, some fresh attraction," showing that he was deeply interested in all the special and attractive developments of his children. There was nothing repulsive in his manner, but a sweet, tender, gentle spirit, which won the undying love of wife and little ones. The children were unrestrained in their innocent joy in his presence, in all of which he was ready to join them, making himself one with them. In a letter to his wife from Johnstown, where he was attending the first session of the Pittsburgh Conference, to which he had just been transferred, he says: "I have thought a good deal

about you since my departure. My wife and sons are the dearest idols of my affection, and I am never so happy as when I have you by my side."

We hear him again, in a similar strain, writing from Pittsburgh, saying: "I thank you for your letter, breathing so much of true devotion. I assure you that it comes to me in desolation like an angel of light. I need not say that your enthusiastic affection finds the very warmest reciprocation in my heart. To say that you are the dearest object of my heart and life is to tell the truth but feebly. How I thank God that I was ever permitted to gaze upon your sunny face and claim you as my own! God bless you, precious Annie, and spare your valuable life many, many years. Have I not proven a faithful correspondent? Well, I deserve little credit, and it is really no ordinary happiness for me to sit down and commune through this unsatisfactory medium with her who is all the world to me -- especially when I know my letters are adding to your pleasure. Kiss my boys for poor Pa. Tell them that I intend to bring up their carriage out of the cellar, and have it all ready for their occupancy and use."

Again, he writes to his wife, who is seeking rest and health at Columbia, her native place: "I am managing to exist in your absence. It is not living, and yet I bear it because I think that you are happier in the East than you could be, perhaps, in Pittsburgh. You know that your comfort is my rule and constant object."

He writes, January 16, 1858: "God has given me my first daughter. O how multiplied are Heaven's mercies!"

Writing to his wife, from Philadelphia, who is at her home in Columbia, he says: "The children are both well. Just now they came into my study and placed on my table their portemonnaies, saying, 'Pa, this is your birthday present from us.' Dear fellows, they did it of their own accord, and in perfect good faith. I put their present in my pocket, and thanked them very sincerely. George asks a great many questions about his sister Annie. When I speak of Ma's return, their little eyes dance with delight."

On his removal to New York, his family went to their old family home until their new home was in readiness. Alfred, writing to his wife, says, "I do not know how I can endure absence from my loved ones so long; but I live a day at a time, and try to keep the future out of my thoughts." "Last night," he says, "I walked the streets of New York with Jesus. Do not be surprised. This was a precious realization, and my heart burned within me as I communed with my kind and sympathizing Redeemer. It was one of the evenings of my life." Though he is surrounded by many friends, and a vast population, in the great city, "Nevertheless, I suffer," he says, "a sense of isolation. My precious family are absent, and none can serve as a substitute. Were it not for the presence of my blessed Savior, which has been a delightful and continued realization, I could scarcely have borne the deprivation, I have been suffering. My Heavenly Father has been specially gracious to me, within the past week or two, accompanying me in my walks, visiting me in my night seasons, strengthening and blessing me in the society of friends, and keeping my mind in perfect peace."

Mr. Cookman's letters to his children breathe a spirit of fatherly tenderness and familiarity which is seldom found among men. There is nothing stern or commanding, nothing to repel, but

everything to inspire love and deepest sympathy. The following was written from New York to his three children, who were in Columbia, Pennsylvania: "It is Saturday night, when Pa, you know, usually studies his sermons. Bruner is asleep, Will is asleep, little Beck Evans is asleep, Ma is getting ready for bed, and I am writing a letter to my dear George and precious Frank, and sweet little Sister Puss. Well, how have you been getting along this week? I hope you have been very good, making as little noise as possible; obeying all that Aunt B. or Grandma has said; remembering your prayers every night and morning; asking your blessing, and behaving well at the table, and acting like little New York gentlemen. On Tuesday I watched you waving your hats, and handkerchiefs, and flags, until I could see you no longer. Then I sat down until I reached Lancaster. When I got home, little Prince danced for joy, he was so glad to see me. Then I started for Nyack, where I found Ma and Brune and Will and little Baby Sister. They were as much delighted as Prince. They asked me a hundred questions about George and Frank and Sister. I told Ma that you were magnificent boys; that Frank did not cry; that sister was growing to be a large, lovely girl. We talk of you every day, and want the weeks to go by right fast until we shall all sit down together in Columbia. We send kisses. George must kiss Frank and Sister for me; Frank must kiss George and Sis, for Ma; Sis must kiss George and Frank for Brune. Do not forget. Good-night!" This is an example of his loving letters to his absent children. Could good children fail to love with deepest affection such a father? And it must be remarked that when with them at home there was the same loving intercourse. The children were never happier than when the father was with them, and the father never more delighted than when they pressed around him in the home circle. He closes another letter, from New York: "Now, I must give you a good-night kiss -- one for George, one for Frank, and one for dear little Sister Puss. Ma says, 'I must send ever so many for her, and Bruner for him, and Willie for him.'"

Mr. Cookman's letters, written to his wife, while engaged in the Christian Commission, during the war, breathe the same loving spirit and tender care for wife and children, and a firm trust in God that all would work for good to the bondman and the nation.

These utterances of Alfred Cookman must convince all that he was an affectionate husband, and tender, loving father, and that these strong domestic ties were dominated by supreme love to God.

\* \* \*

## THE PRESENT STATE OF THE FAMILY

Seven children survived the father, four sons and three daughters. Two of the number have since joined the father in the better land. Helen, a lovely daughter of eleven years, was the first to depart. The second was Alfred, a babe of only fourteen months at his father's death. A graduate of the Wesleyan University and of the Medical College of Philadelphia, he had grown to manhood, and had commenced the practice of medicine in Philadelphia, with every prospect of success. He was a Christian young man, his mother's hope, and died within a few weeks of his contemplated wedding.

There are (year 1900) five children still living, three sons and two daughters. The eldest, George Grimston, is engaged in the practice of law in Philadelphia; two are in the Methodist

ministry -- Frank Simpson, a member of the Newark Conference, and William Wilberforce, a member of the Philadelphia Conference. Mrs. Cookman resides with her daughter Annie (Mrs. Schureman Halsted), at 5530 Morris Street, Germantown, Pa.; Mary (Mrs. Sigourney Fay Clark), resides in Elizabeth, New Jersey. Miss Mary Cookman, sister of Alfred Cookman, is the only survivor of the family of Rev. George G. and Mary Cookman.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 9

### A LOVING LEADER OF THE NATIONAL HOLINESS MOVEMENT

The year 1867 will always be memorable in the history of that movement known as the holiness revival in America, under the auspices of the "National Association for the Promotion of Holiness." As a nation, we had just emerged from the most gigantic rebellion the world had ever witnessed, and the Churches, both North and South, had been greatly demoralized and sadly weakened spiritually. Many a good conscience had been wrecked by seizing upon favorable opportunities to amass wealth by unjustifiable methods. A few were found who still wept between the porch and the altar. Camp-meetings, which had been a great power in early Methodism, had so far fallen into disrepute that the Church papers were earnestly discussing the propriety of wholly abandoning them.

The General Conference of 1864 made an earnest but mournful appeal to the Church, as a "haughty and rebellious people," to properly deplore our sins, "and let God, our Heavenly Father, behold us in tears and contrition before his throne, pleading day and night, through the Redeemer, for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the Church, the nation, and the world." "This," they say, "is our only hope." There was not only a manifest declension in spirituality, but, as is common at such times, there was a growing opposition to the subject of entire sanctification. This was manifest in the pulpit, the pew, and at our camp-meetings, until the question of holding camp-meetings, where the subject of holiness should have the right of way, began to be agitated, by ministers and laymen. It was finally determined by a few brethren to call a meeting of such ministers and laymen as were favorable to holding a camp-meeting, the special object of which should be the promotion of the work of entire sanctification. Alfred Cookman was among the foremost men in this movement. But for his connection with this work, as one of its prime movers and supporters, it is doubtful if his name would have been as widely known. It was this which contributed largely to give him a national reputation, and extend his influence world-wide. He signed the call for the meeting to be held in Philadelphia, at 1018 Arch Street, June 15th, to arrange for the first National Camp-meeting. He prepared the call for the first meeting, which was accepted by the brethren, and ordered to be printed.

The meeting in Philadelphia brought together a company of strong, noble men. The president was no less a person than the venerable Dr. George C. M. Roberts, of Baltimore, whose prayer at the opening lifted all hearts to God. In a few chosen words he stated the object of the meeting, and expressed his great joy that he had lived to see that day, and for the bright prospects before them. The venerable Anthony Atwood presented the following resolution:

Resolved, That we hold a camp-meeting for the special promotion of Christian purity.



This elicited no discussion, as all were agreed. The place selected for holding the meeting was Vineland, New Jersey; the time, July 17, 1867. The "Call" for the meeting, prepared and read by Alfred Cookman, was as follows:

"A general camp-meeting of the friends of holiness, to be held at Vineland, Cumberland County, N. J., will commence Wednesday, July 17th, and close on Friday, 26th instant.

"We affectionately invite all, irrespective of denominational ties, interested in the subject of the higher Christian life, to come together and spend a week in God's great temple of nature. While we shall not cease to labor for the conviction and conversion of sinners, the special object of this meeting will be to offer continued and united prayer for the revival of the work of holiness in the Churches; to secure increased wisdom, that we may be able to give a reason of the hope that is within us with meekness and fear; to strengthen the hands of those who feel themselves comparatively isolated in their profession of holiness; to help any who would enter into this rest of faith and love; to realize together a Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Ghost, -- and all with a view to increased usefulness in the Churches of which we are members.

"Come, brothers and sisters of the various denominations, and let us in this forest meeting furnish an illustration of evangelical union, and make common supplication for the descent of the Spirit upon ourselves, the Church, the Nation, and the world."

The call for such a meeting could not have been more specific and comprehensive, and in all respects more catholic and Christlike. It was such a call as could but find a ready response in every Christian heart.

Mr. Cookman felt deeply the importance of such a movement, for, writing to a friend, he said: "You have doubtless been advised of our Vineland camp-meeting enterprise. It is rather a bold movement for the friends of holiness; but I believe it is in the order of God, and will be accompanied and followed by blessed results. Associated with the originators of this enterprise, I can bear a most emphatic testimony to the purity of their motives, and the thoughtful care and earnest supplication to God that characterized their deliberations. Indeed; the day we spent in Philadelphia, making arrangements, was one of the best days of my life."

The meeting commenced July 17th. The morning was clear and bright. Multitudes from the different denominations found their way to the camp, to hear the gospel of holiness. Alfred Cookman and his family were early in their places. Rev. John S. Inskip was the chosen leader. The services were opened with singing,

"There is a fountain filled with blood."

This has been the "battle-hymn" of the holiness movement for the last thirty-two years. Mr. Inskip led in prayer, and the heavens seemed responsive to his petition. Revs. Andrew Longacre and B. M. Adams assisted further in the opening services. Several addresses were delivered, and then another season of prayer, in which Messrs. Adams, Coleman, and Alfred Cookman joined.

Few present will forget Mr. Cookman's prayer. He seemed inspired. The opening sermon was preached by Rev. J. W. Home, and the closing sermon by Rev. B. W. Gorham.

Mr. Cookman's sermon on the occasion was from 1 Thess. iv, 3: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." A special unction attended its delivery. It was clear and forceful, and made a deep and strong impression. He was careful to set forth the definite experience, in the interests of which the meeting was held. The results of the meeting far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its ardent friends. Many were sanctified wholly, and large numbers were converted. Among the latter was a wayward son of Bishop Simpson. The bishop and his family, including his son Charles, were in attendance during the meeting. The bishop had been absent from the ground during the Sabbath, officiating at the opening of a Methodist Church. As he returned to the camp-meeting, Monday morning, he was informed that he was needed at the Kensington tent. As he entered the tent, he saw his son, of many prayers, upon his knees earnestly seeking pardon. He made his way through a company of sympathizing friends, knelt beside his broken-hearted boy, and with tearful eyes and uplifted hands prayed as only a Christian father can pray for a penitent son. The whole company were melted and moved with deepest sympathy. Charles was converted. A few months later that son lay sick unto death. A little time before he departed, turning to his weeping mother, he said, "Mother, I shall thank God to all eternity for the Vineland camp-meeting." It was to this death-scene the bishop referred at Alfred Cookman's funeral, when he said, "He stood by the dying bed of one I loved, and his words and counsels were those of a Christian minister."

Of Alfred Cookman's relation to the National Camp-meeting Association, Dr. H. B. Ridgaway says, "Whatever may be said of the merits of the Issue involved in the National Camp-meeting Association, it is certain that Mr. Cookman was fully committed to its support, and was in strict accord with its purpose." So strongly did he press the necessity of this work, that brethren, more or less conservative, knowing his constitutional cautiousness, were themselves greatly inspired to action by his great boldness.

At a meeting of those who signed the call for the Vineland meeting, for the purpose of considering, among other things, the question of holding another meeting in 1868, Mr. Cookman earnestly supported the measure. And through his special efforts Manheim, instead of Round Lake, was selected as the place of meeting, because of his interest in the locality. In that memorable meeting the "National Camp-meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness" was formed. The brethren knelt, Brother Cookman prayed. Those who were present speak of that wonderful prayer. He prayed as if a great battle was near, and that victory could only be secured through the leadership of the "Captain of our Salvation," the Lord of Hosts. The Association was formed, and all the business of the meeting transacted while the brethren were yet upon their knees.

\* \* \*

## MANHEIM

The National Camp-meeting at Manheim, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, commenced July 14, 1868. Many thought it not the most favorable locality for such a meeting, but through the urgent efforts of Alfred Cookman, who claimed to be familiar with the country, the brethren consented. It

is true, the weather was oppressively hot, the water was very scarce and miserably poor, and the dust was almost blinding, but the people seemed to care for none of these things. At least twelve thousand thirsty souls drank in the Word of Life, which fell from lips touched with the fires of Pentecost. Not less than six hundred tents sheltered people from nearly every State in the Union; not less than three hundred ministers, including that prince among men, Bishop Simpson. The Sabbath was a great day. The love feast was a season never to be forgotten. It was in that memorable love-feast that Alfred Cookman gave that never to be forgotten testimony: "Alfred Cookman, washed in the blood of the Lamb." It was given without any ostentatious display, and all who knew him felt that it was true to fact. Bishop Simpson preached in the forenoon, from Romans viii, 14: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Many hearts were greatly moved under that wonderful sermon.

Rev. J. S. Inskip preached in the afternoon in his usual effective manner.

Alfred Cookman was the preacher for the evening. He was in his prime, and the people were expectant. A great victory was anticipated. He had prepared a sermon for the occasion on a certain text. But, strange to say, text and sermon had effectually vanished, while many thousands were anxiously waiting. Nothing moved or disconcerted, he commenced calmly to talk to the people, trusting God to give him the message. He proceeded to relate his personal experience, and as he did so, the Spirit of God came upon the assembly with unusual power. From the beginning he had the rapt attention of the people. He became uncommonly impressive and earnest. The living mass before him seemed to be in his hands as clay in the hands of the potter, to be melted and molded as God would have them. He dwelt upon the work of the Holy Spirit, and the work of entire sanctification, describing the manner in which he had been led into the experience. Every heart seemed nigh to breaking for the longing it had for "the more excellent way." The people were profoundly moved. Cries and groans were heard on every hand. "Nothing short of a Pentecost," says one who was present, "seemed suited to the occasion." If ever mortal was inspired, Alfred Cookman seemed to be. At the close of his address, he prayed, and who that heard that prayer can ever forget it! One who was present describes it thus: "For awhile he pleaded upon his knees. Then he arose, and, standing upon his feet, grew more and more vehement. His hands were lifted. His voice in mighty tones swelled out upon the night air. Cries and groans of oppressed souls commingling. Standing thus, with hands upraised, his face toward the hill from whence cometh help, his faith grasped the promises, and he was conqueror, and hallelujahs, like the sound of many waters, rolled through the forest temple." (Days of Power.)

How many souls were fully saved that night will not be known till the books are opened.

Mr. Cookman threw his soul into all the services of the meeting, and was pressing the people into the enjoyment of holiness. The Methodist says: "None who were privileged to be present will ever forget the Sunday evening when Rev, Alfred Cookman led the congregation to God, and pressed upon them, with his masterly and persuasive eloquence, the question of true spiritual power as connected with personal holiness, and in the most fervent prayer led the congregation to the cross. Men fell under the mighty power of God in all parts of the ground. This was only equaled by the wonderful Pentecostal season on Monday night."

The Monday night meeting at Manheim was an event in itself, unlike anything that ever occurred at a national meeting. Rev. John Thompson had preached. Rev. J. S. Inskip had exhorted in an unusual manner. Rev. George W. Woodruff knelt to pray, when suddenly, as a flash of lightning from a clear sky, there fell upon the people a power, and with it came spontaneous bursts of joy and groans and cries for mercy. For one hour the scene beggared all description. The people were crying for mercy and pardon on the one hand, and for purity on the other. Scores were converted, and greater numbers were sanctified wholly. Men were there from other lands, and returned to tell of the Monday night at Manheim as the most remarkable display of God's power that they had ever witnessed. Its sound went out into all the earth. We were there and know whereof we speak; but we can give but a meager account of the scene. Rev. John Thompson, a little before he died, said, referring to Manheim: "I shall never forget, either in time or in eternity, especially I shall always remember that wonderful Monday night at Manheim. That was really the night of my life."

\* \* \*

## ROUND LAKE

We next find Alfred Cookman at Round Lake, New York, July 6, 1869, with zeal unabated, intent on pressing the subject of holiness with which his soul seemed inflamed. This was a meeting far exceeding in numbers the Manheim meeting. The location was in its favor; it had been widely advertised, if, indeed, it needed advertising. From Manheim a sound had gone out into nearly all the earth, and people came as on the day of Pentecost, not perhaps from "every nation under heaven," but representatives were there from different nationalities, to see for themselves what the wonderful movement meant. Mr. Cookman preached on the occasion with an unction we will not attempt to describe, from Ephesians v, 18, "Be filled with the Spirit." Every heart seemed to be intensely longing for this Divine fullness; and many, under that sermon, formed the resolution never to rest until they were in possession of that God-promised gift; and many received it then and there, by faith in Him who had promised.

It was at the Sunday morning love-feast at Round Lake that he gave his Manheim testimony, "Alfred Cookman, washed in the blood of the Lamb." He moved among the people as a saint of God. All his testimonies, and exhortations, and personal conversations, revealed the fact that he was "dwelling in the secret chamber of the Most High," and, like Enoch, was walking with God. Of that camp-meeting a minister from the city of Philadelphia said: "I expect to thank God for it through everlasting ages. The effect was Pentecostal." But he says, "Never have I seen such uniform decorum." Bishop Simpson, who was present, speaks of "being highly pleased with its management." Alfred Cookman had charge of the Ministers' Meeting on the Sabbath, and in this was greatly blessed. God gave him wonderful access to the hearts of his ministerial brethren. His fraternal spirit, entire freedom from an authoritative bearing, and his loving words, won all hearts. As he would say, "Come, brothers, take my hand, and let us kneel together," it was done so sweetly and with such a sincere, humble spirit, that none could resist.

Up to 1870 there had been but one National camp-meeting held each year; but so urgent was the demand from all parts of the land, that it was resolved to hold three meetings in 1870: at Hamilton, Massachusetts; Milton Grove, Oakington, Maryland; and Des Plaines, Illinois.

\* \* \*

## HAMILTON

The Hamilton Camp-meeting opened June 21st. The association was largely represented. It was too early in the season for the latitude of New England, and the weather was exceedingly unpropitious. But the meeting was attended by a large number of ministers from all parts of New England and elsewhere. The large attendance of ministers seemed a special feature of the meeting. Mr. Cookman was there in the very fullness of the Spirit. It was his first visit to New England; but his fame as a holy man and able preacher had gone before him. He was present in all the services, and no man exerted a greater influence than Alfred Cookman. On Sunday evening, instead of preaching a sermon, as at Manheim, he gave an account of his personal experience. This produced a profound impression upon the ministry and membership of the Church. It was a rainy evening, and the crowd was not present. On the following Tuesday morning he delivered a memorable sermon from 1 Thess. v, 23, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." It was a clear, forceful setting forth of the great doctrine of perfect love, and the obligations to seek it now. The effect of the sermon was witnessed in the hundreds who thronged the altar and filled all the available space around as seekers of heart purity, and great numbers found that for which they sought.

Mr. Cookman's prayers during the meeting were attended with a power that moved the entire encampment. Writing to his wife from Hamilton of the Sabbath, he says: "It was a wonderful Sabbath, certainly the best of any we have spent in the woods as a National Committee, and the friends expect a sermon from me tomorrow. This meeting, in interest and power, is a great success. The brethren feel in its impressions and holy influence it is equal, or ahead of Round Lake."

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 10

### THE NATIONAL HOLINESS MOVEMENT -- (Continued)

\* \* \*

## OAKINGTON

Our next meeting was held at Oakington, Maryland. Here Alfred Cookman was at home. He had lived and labored in the Churches in this vicinity, and knew the people. But he entered into the work with his accustomed earnestness. The atmosphere was torrid, the shade poor, the water bad, making it a most unfavorable location for a camp-meeting. But no one would have judged by the spirit of the people that they felt these inconveniences. On the second day Mr. Cookman had charge of the eight o'clock morning meeting. He called the attention of the people to three questions: "Does our desire need to be intensified? Does not our consecration need to be more perfect? Do we not look more to ourselves than to the blessed Christ?" These points were discussed in a most impressive manner. Silent prayer, for which the National Association in those days was noted, followed. Then Brother Cookman led in vocal prayer. Many souls were led into the freedom of

perfect love. After an impressive sermon by Dr. William Butler, Mr. Cookman followed with a pointed exhortation and prayer-meeting, which resulted in the salvation of many.

At the Sabbath love-feast he said: "As at Manheim two years ago, so here at Oakington, Alfred Cookman, washed in the blood of the Lamb."

On Sabbath evening he led the public service in an earnest exhortation, leading the people most successfully into fuller and richer fellowship with God. No such day for excessive heat had ever been experienced at any National camp-meeting, and yet few days ever witnessed greater displays of God's power in the conversion and purification of souls. At six o'clock Monday evening Alfred Cookman had charge of the Ministers' Meeting in the tabernacle. At the opening of the service he intimated his sense of unworthiness to lead his ministerial brethren. Rev. John Thompson said: "Suppose we say that we want you to lead us, whither would you lead us?" "I would lead you," he responded, "directly to the cross." At this reply the brethren, coming from all parts of the tent, gathered around the leader, and that great company of ministers knelt together in a solemn, earnest prayer of consecration. Their hearts were melted while God revealed to them his special presence. Many testified to having then and there received the assurance of full salvation. On Wednesday afternoon, the ninth day of the meeting, Mr. Cookman preached from Romans xiii, 14, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." His theme was, "Sanctified character the highest investiture of the soul." The Divine unction was upon him, and the congregation attentively listened, were deeply impressed, and generally yielded to the truth, and crowded to the altar until there seemed no more space for them. The glory of God rested upon the camp. It was estimated that not less than seven hundred ministers were present at Oakington, and of the people there was no numbering them. Our space does not allow us to describe the many soul-stirring scenes which occurred there.

\* \* \*

## DES PLAINES

The next meeting for the season was held at Des Plaines, Illinois, commencing August 9, 1870. The National Association was well represented. Many representative men of the West were present. Dr. Reid, of the Northwestern Christian Advocate; Drs. Bannister, Raymond, and Kidder, of Evanston; Professor Jaques, of Bloomington, Illinois; Rev. Hooper Crews -- all of whom preached on the occasion. There were, also, Dr. (now Bishop) Fowler, Dr. W. C. Willing, and others, from all parts of the Northwest. These leading men in Western Methodism strictly observed the movement, and gave their unqualified approval of all they heard and saw. Aside from Rev. J. S. Inskip, Alfred Cookman attracted most attention. He had charge of the Preachers' Meeting, on the second day of the services. Dr. J. M. Reid and others led in prayer, and Brother Cookman addressed the brethren in his usually impressive manner, and many were helped in making a complete surrender to Christ. On Friday he preached a memorable sermon from Ephesians v, 23, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." He dwelt upon that entire consecration which precedes entire sanctification, showing in what respects it differed from that so-called consecration made at conversion. The people were profoundly impressed. We sat upon the stand, and carefully noted the impression made upon the congregation. Dr. Fowler was near us on the stand. No sooner was the sermon concluded, and an invitation given to come to the altar, than he, for the first time, made a rush, not going down the steps, but plunged down over the front of the

platform, raised some three feet above the ground, and threw himself on his knees in the straw. The place was at once crowded with seeking souls. It seemed as if the whole crowd were anxious to find a kneeling spot in the inclosure. It would be utterly impossible for us to describe the scene. There was no great outcry, nothing unduly extravagant in physical demonstration, but a deep, all-pervading sense of the presence of God.

The following day Brother Cookman led the early morning meeting in the tabernacle. The Sabbath was a great day. The sun shone brightly. From five o'clock in the morning till ten at night the baffle raged. Mr. Inskip preached in the forenoon; Dr. Reid preached in the afternoon; and Alfred Cookman related his personal experience in the evening. While he, in an earnest, humble spirit told how God led him into the fullness of love, a solemn stillness reigned in the vast audience, the Holy Spirit made deep and lasting impressions upon the souls of the people. When an invitation was given for seekers to come to the altar, hundreds of believers and unbelievers rushed forward, filling all the space around the stand. A skeptic arose and said, "I want the true religion, the religion of Jesus." It was estimated that not less than one hundred were converted on that Sabbath. Twenty-five children and seven adults were converted in the children's meeting. No such triumphs of grace had ever been witnessed in the Northwest.

Tuesday was a marked day at Des Plaines. In the forenoon a meeting was held in which the people were urged to seek the Lord as a present Savior from sin. The altar was cleared, and an invitation extended to all classes to come. There was a great rush. After the altar had been filled, twenty-five rows of seats were filled with seekers. It was a most wonderful scene. For a time silent prayer was offered. Then Brother Cookman broke forth in one of his most wonderful prayers. The power of God was not only on him, but on the people. For a time he remained upon his knees; then, in his deep earnestness, he rose to his feet, and, as at Manheim, he seemed to take hold of God through his promises. We never witnessed such a scene. Great numbers in that company found the blessing of pardon and purity, and went forth clothed and in their right mind. Dr. Raymond said: "I know if there is anything true and good and right for man in this life, it is here in this meeting; and if I did not want it more than anything else, I should not respect myself. If there is anything like heaven on earth, it is under this canvas."

No language can adequately describe the last night at Des Plaines, when more than five hundred souls were prostrate before God, pleading for personal salvation. There were at least one thousand who professed to have experienced the blessing of perfect love, and not less than two hundred converted.

Dr. Reid, editor of the Northwestern, voiced the general sentiment of the people when he said: "The committee repressed with sedulous care all fanaticism, all wild shriekings and contortions. Silence was a wonderful power with them, the subdued song or the unuttered prayer, the vast assembly waiting on God, just waiting. O, we shall never forget it! Not a word said, but every heart open heavenward, and God pouring his blessing in. The meeting was a blessing, and the committee won all hearts. The mercy-tide is higher on these lake shores for their coming, and with the Churches we will bless God for ever and ever. Amen."

Of the statement that the Association did not seek the conversion of sinners, Dr. Reid says: "Notwithstanding that holiness was the prominent object of all discourses and prayers, efforts for

the conversion of sinners were not neglected. We think that not less than one hundred adults and more than that number of children professed to receive a witness of sins forgiven and adoption into God's family. Unless this National camp-meeting differs from others, there has been some mistake in the reports on this subject. The results, in bringing souls to Christ, estimating no other good that was done, mark the meeting as a signal success. It has evidently marked an era in the religious experience of Northwestern Methodism, and thus far there is in it great promise for good and little promise of evil."

A minister, writing to the Home Journal, says: "The whole Northwest is ablaze with salvation. Holiness is the theme in every direction. The ministers have gone home covered with sanctifying power, and whole Churches are at the altar seeking holiness. Praise God for Des Plaines camp-meeting!" Alfred Cookman left his stamp of holiness upon the Northwest. They were anxious that he should come among them. Writing to his wife from Des Plaines, he says: "In the evening, as usual, Brother Alfred had to head the column. God helped me as much, perhaps, as ever in my life, and I trust great good was done. The whole ground seemed to be a great altar, sinners and unbelievers down before God. We think it the best Sabbath of any of our National camp-meetings. Glory to the Lamb!" Of Monday night he says: "God is present tonight in great power. The West answers to the East, and shouts holiness unto the Lord. The people are very kind. Some of them think they must have me in the Northwest," etc. We must turn from these scenes.

In 1871, in consequence of a laborious evangelist trip to the Pacific Coast, including Salt Lake City, it was thought best to hold but two National camp-meetings; one at Round Lake, and one at Urbana, Ohio. We may say here that Brother Cookman expressed to the writer, on the Sabbath before his death, that it was one of the deepest regrets of his life that he could not accompany the brethren on their tour to the Pacific Coast. "I would have regarded it," he said, "as the event of a lifetime."

The camp-meeting at Round Lake commenced July 4th. This was our second meeting at Round Lake. Alfred Cookman was there in the fullness of the Spirit. His sermon on the occasion was from the text, "I press toward the mark," etc. As we look back upon the scene, he seems to have been impressed that he was doing his last work. Every faculty of his being seemed laid under contribution to press the people into the fullness of God's great salvation. The people were greatly moved and signally blessed.

A writer, speaking of the Sabbath service, says: "Rev. Alfred Cookman preached in the afternoon to one of the largest and most attentive audiences that a camp-meeting ever saw."

A correspondent of the Troy Daily Times says: "At two P. M., Rev. A. Cookman, of the Newark Conference, preached from Philippians iii, 14, 'I press toward the mark of the prize of my high calling.' The speaker claimed that Paul was a man of one idea, but that idea was complete in itself. If he made tents, that was but a part of his religion. His preaching was tributary to his idea of holy living. He defined the mark of the prize as the Bible standard of Christian excellence, and spoke of the evil of a wrong standards. He spoke beautifully of the prize itself in the final glorification of soul and body in the likeness of Christ. It is hard to do justice to a discourse which, with the happy manner of its delivery, made a deep impression."



Mr. Cookman's testimony at the love-feast is described by one present as follows: "When you were singing of the cross a few minutes since, I thought that I had drawn a circle around the cross, and Jesus had lifted me up from the foot of the cross, and given me a home in his heart. I am dwelling in the supreme center of bliss."

Although very greatly exhausted by the labors of the meeting, at its close, with his sister Mary and a few friends, he made a visit to Saratoga Springs. He seemed extremely happy, running over with joy. On his return to Round Lake, he took his family to Ocean Grove, hoping that a brief stay at the seaside would soon restore him to health. His health had been perfect, and he knew not what it was to rest. The second National camp-meeting had begun at Urbana, Ohio, and Alfred scented the battle from afar, and his holy soul was stirred for the conflict. His wife, knowing his weakness, pleaded with him not to go. With tears in her eyes, she said, "O Alfred, you will not go to Urbana?" "My dear," he replied, "it is God's will." knowing his weakness at Round Lake, none of the brethren expected him at Urbana; but we were delighted to see him.

During the Urbana meeting Alfred preached twice, and with a pathos and effectiveness which was never excelled, even by him. "Thousands of deathless spirits," says Rev. L. R. Dunn, "will never have the impression produced by those sermons effaced." He preached on Friday from "Be ye holy." The people gave profound attention to his words. The second sermon, from "Be filled with the Spirit," was delivered the following Tuesday morning to a congregation of not less than three thousand. Every eye seemed fastened upon the preacher. It was his last National camp-meeting sermon, and had he known it was his last, he could not have preached more effectively. His spirit was profoundly moved, and he poured out his soul almost unto death for the salvation of the people. The noon hour came, and the bell announced the dinner ready; but not a person left his place. All seemed as if chained to their seats until the preacher had concluded his discourse, and the people dismissed in an orderly manner. It was really the great effort of his life -- treat in the searching truths uttered, great in the spiritual power with which the truth was delivered, great in the overwhelming effect produced upon the audience during its delivery, and great in the deep, lasting impression made upon that vast company. A correspondent to a Cincinnati paper gives a description of the sermon, in which he says: "His clear, ringing voice penetrated to the remotest bounds of the great square, and under the influence of his eloquence men stood motionless as statues. The hour of twelve came, and the gongs and dinner-bells around the inclosure began an interruptive clangor. But no person in that congregation could have been tempted away by an Epicurean feast. In that moment there was food for the moral and religious nature being dispensed with all the liberality of eloquence, and the wants of physical nature were unheeded in their appeals. An imperfect report would utterly mar the beauty of the speaker's utterances, and a perfect report would fail to convey any idea of the glowing eloquence of his style, and the telling effect of his, pathetic appeals to men and women to 'be filled with the Holy Spirit.' Your types could print the mere words; but no pen-power that I know of can clothe them with the garb of oratory in which they trooped forth from the speaker's lips, to take by storm the stubborn citadel of men's hearts and minds."

Writing to his wife from Urbana, he says: "Our meeting progresses with constantly increasing interest. Every service is a signal victory. This afternoon I preached to a large and attentive congregation from the text, 'Be ye holy.' God graciously strengthened and helped me, and my friends say I never had a better time. Since, the sermon I am a little prostrated, and my legs

stiffen up; but I am getting on most gloriously. Sincerely, I have not been as well for five weeks. Tomorrow will be the Sabbath. I conduct the love-feast in the morning."

"My own soul is being enriched. I want to bring home a double portion of the Spirit, and so be furnished for a blessed and successful campaign this autumn. . . . And now I must close my note. The forces are gathering for a mighty battle. O for salvation in floods! I will not get back home before Saturday night. And now, good-bye. The Lord bless and watch over you. Kisses for children, love for my friends, and believe me, your devoted husband."

It has been truly said, the people "little thought that he was talking not only from his heart, but was talking away his heart. The last and best of Alfred Cookman was condensing itself into sentences to live and grow in men's minds forever."

At the close of the camp-meeting, Alfred Cookman returned to Ocean Grove, not to rest, for it seemed he could not rest. The "zeal of God's house was eating him up." He seemed to be consumed with desire to proclaim the wonderful love of the Holy Spirit. He spent the Sabbath at Ocean Grove, and preached from his favorite text, "Be filled with the Spirit." After the Sabbath, instead of resting, he is away to Martha's Vineyard, and there he preaches on "Be filled with the Spirit." Like Bishop Asbury, he seems to have felt that he was "divinely commissioned to preach sanctification in every sermon."

On his return from Martha's Vineyard he spent two weeks at Ocean Grove, and then with his family returned to his home to resume his pastoral work.

October 18th, Alfred Cookman attended the annual meeting of the Association, which met in New York, less than one month before his decease. He was in feeble health; but his soul was burning with desire to spread holiness. He urged that at least five National camp-meetings should be held the coming year, pledging himself to be at four of them. His zeal knew no abatement. But here his labors with the National Association ended. One month later he had reached the eternal camp-meeting grounds on the banks of the mystic Jordan, from which he could observe the battle between sin and holiness as it was being successfully waged by his associates, many of whom have since joined him in holy triumph.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 11

### THE SUCCESSFUL PASTOR AND PERSUASIVE PREACHER

As a faithful pastor and effective preacher, Alfred Cookman was eminently successful. The pulpit seemed to be his throne, and the pastorate his divinely appointed vineyard. He knew how to preach the gospel, which was adapted to save sinners and build up believers in the faith of Christ. He was always able to "feed the flock of Christ." He never failed to hold his congregations and add largely to their number. The people came to his ministry like hungry sheep to a good shepherd to be fed, and when they asked "a fish, he did not give them a serpent," and send them empty away. Though not a profound scholar himself, the most cultured heard him with profit, and went from his ministry rejoicing, as from a feast of fat things.

As a pastor, the people became strongly attached to him, and at times well-nigh idolized him. In seasons of bereavement among his people, his words were always full of sympathy, and he was always able to administer genuine Christian consolation. The very tones of his voice in the prayers he offered on such occasions, drew him closer and closer to the hearts of his people.

Mr. Cookman joined the Philadelphia Conference in 1848. He had served the Church at Attleboro, and also on Delaware City Circuit, as a "supply," the two previous years. But on joining the Conference he was appointed to the Germantown Circuit, a suburb of Philadelphia.

In 1849 he was appointed to Kensington and Port Richmond, as a junior preacher under Rev. David Dailey.

This, it will be remembered, was the first appointment which his honored father received on joining the Philadelphia Conference. The very church in which his father so eloquently proclaimed the gospel of Jesus now resounded with the voice of his equally devoted son.

So greatly were his services appreciated that he was returned a second year, with the privilege of being allowed to make a visit to England. His venerable grandfather had urged his coming, and Alfred was anxious to comply with his grandfather's wishes. It is not surprising, however, that his good mother should have hesitated to risk her dearest earthly treasure to that treacherous ocean which had a few years before engulfed husband and father. She finally consented, and Alfred sailed from New York in the latter part of July, in the steamer *Europa*. It is enough to say that this visit was eminently satisfactory to Alfred and his English relatives, and was ever remembered by him as a bright spot in his history. "Stepney Lodge," Hull, the residence of his grandfather, was a place of great delight to our young friend. The days he spent in London were crowded with sight-seeing. He visited the Wesleyan Conference, and was honored with a seat on the platform; visited the British Museum, saw the royal family, etc. Having completed his visit, he bade adieu to his many relatives and friends, turned his face homeward, and in due time was in labors abundant on his charge.

Alfred Cookman was a Conference preacher for twenty-two years. During that time he was pastor of twelve Churches in five different Annual Conferences. The following is a list of his appointments after he became a member of the Conference: 1848, Germantown and Chestnut Hill; 1849-50, Kensington and Port Chester; 1851-2, West Chester Station; 1852-3, Locust Street, Harrisburg; 1854-5, Christ Church, Pittsburgh; 1857-8, Green Street, Philadelphia; 1859-60, Union Church, Philadelphia; 1861-2, Central Church, New York; 1863-4, Trinity, West 34th Street, New York; 1865-8, Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia; 1868-70, Grace Church, Wilmington, Delaware; 1871, Central Church, Newark, N. J.

It will be observed that Alfred was stationed five times in Philadelphia, twice in New York City, once in Harrisburg, once in Pittsburgh, once in Wilmington, Del., and finally in Central Church, Newark, N. J. These Churches included at the time some of the best Churches in Methodism.

Mr. Cookman's labors on the Germantown Circuit were marked, it is said, by "fidelity to duty, and all his exercises were indications of the future successes which were destined to crown his ministry."

A lady, writing of the pleasant "memories" of Alfred Cookman, as she knew him on the Delaware City Circuit, which he traveled the year before he became a member of the Conference, says: "To all classes of this population young Cookman came as a messenger of life. His young heart burned with love of souls. He went from his closet to the pulpit, and thus panoplied with power, it is no marvel that the multitudes which from Sabbath to Sabbath hung upon the earnest pleadings of his eloquent lips for their salvation, regarded him as a royal ambassador from the Court of the Most High." (Mrs. L. A. Battershall.) The same writer declares that, notwithstanding "his rich endowment by nature with a genial spirit and an ease of grace and manner fitting him to shine as the center of the social circle, yet she never knew him betrayed into levity unbecoming a minister of the gospel of Christ."

In the spring of 1851, on his return from England, he was married, and at the next Conference, a few weeks later, was appointed to the charge of West Chester Station, about thirty miles from Philadelphia. It was an old Quaker town, with a Methodist Church limited in numbers and wealth, but greatly encouraged with the prospect of having the eloquent and popular Cookman and his youthful bride. Everything was done to make them comfortable and happy. His fame had preceded him, and from his first Sabbath the people were attracted to his public ministrations. His church was crowded, not only by Methodists and those who were in sympathy with them, but even the elite of the community were attracted to his church, and were delighted and profited. The Quakers were greatly charmed by the spirit which pervaded his sermons "and the godly simplicity of his manners." He was the leading spiritual teacher in the community. As the days and weeks passed, his influence grew more and more, until his ascendancy over the hearts and minds of the people exceeded in a short time that of any former minister in many years.

Mr. Cookman's success in this charge may be inferred from these facts: He found the church embarrassed with a debt of three thousand dollars, of ten years' standing, and much in need of repairs. The membership was small, only one hundred and fifty-two, and they with little means. He reported at the close of his first year one hundred and seventy members and seventy-five probationers. At the close of the second year he reported two hundred and twenty-five members and twenty-six probationers. In the meantime he had paid off the entire debt, and put the church in excellent condition. "The church," it is said, "was always full when Brother Cookman preached." "He was popular in other Churches as in his own. Everybody loved him, and spoke of him as the lovely, eloquent Cookman." This same writer says: "It is fair to state that Brother Cookman gave an impulse to Methodism in West Chester such as it had never had, and we still enjoy the benefits thereof. It is difficult to decide which was the stronger attraction for the people, his unassuming piety and sweet, loving spirit, or his thrilling eloquence that so enchained the multitudes."

In 1853, Mr. Cookman was stationed in Harrisburg, the capital of the State. He at once made himself felt in his new field. Locust Street received him with enthusiastic delight, and very soon his eloquent pulpit efforts attracted general attention. When the Legislature assembled, his church being conveniently located, the members and visitors of that body were attracted to it. He was elected chaplain of the House of Delegates, was selected to offer prayer at the inauguration of

the governor, and seemed to hold a position far in advance of what might have been expected of a youth of twenty-five years.

Mr. Cookman remained in Harrisburg two years. Under his ministry the society prospered. The Church had gained in membership in the two years ninety members and seventy probationers, while its financial and social standing had increased proportionately. Alfred Cookman's preaching at this time is represented as "replete with sublime thoughts and beautiful illustrations." It is said that "one secret of Mr. Cookman's popularity and success as a preacher was that his sermons were all good, and that whatever emergency called him forth, he had a peculiar faculty of happily adapting his discourse to the occasion." "We like his sermons," said one, "on account of their freshness, originality, and the thoroughness and the earnestness with which they are delivered. For a young man he is a speaker of superior ability."

It was about this time that Alfred Cookman entered the field as a lecturer, and received many commendations from the public press. "The Bible" was his favorite subject, especially in his earlier ministry. He delivered a lecture at Harrisburg on this subject, his theme being, "The Bible is the basis, the bond, the bulwark, and the boast of our free institutions." He was invited to deliver the annual sermon before "The Society of Evangelical Inquiry of Dickinson College." The sermon was not only well received; but it is said to have established the preacher's high reputation among the students."

About this time Mr. Cookman delivered a lecture in Philadelphia before the Young Men's Christian Association, on "Concentrated Energy as a Prerequisite to Success and Distinction in any Pursuit in Life." He is reported as possessing a "style clear and perspicuous, and at the same time brilliant and ornate. His voice, which is perfectly under his control, is remarkably distinct, musical, and sonorous, and his manner of delivery is highly oratorical and effective. Mr. Cookman, although quite a young man, has already won for himself an enviable reputation." On his leaving Harrisburg, one of the papers said: "He was popular with all classes and all denominations, and his departure is universally regretted."

In 1855, Cookman was transferred to the Pittsburgh Conference, and stationed at Christ, Church, Pittsburgh, Pa. A new Methodist church, of Gothic architecture, had been erected at Pittsburgh; it was at that time the costliest edifice in American Methodism, and Alfred Cookman, a youth of twenty-seven years, was selected as its pastor. It was a heavy responsibility to assume, and he was not unmindful of what it involved. But it was soon evident to all that no more appropriate choice could have been made. Though young in years, he was not wanting in experience. He proved himself to be a man of courage as well as caution.

As a preacher, it was true that his power to attract and hold the people in a great city was to be tested. But his ability was at once recognized, and his church, though having the disadvantage of being a "pewed" church, was speedily filled. He was in all respects a success, even in the forming period of this important Church. Though a transfer, and that to the leading Church in the Conference, Mr. Cookman was received cordially by the preachers of the Conference from the first. They gave him their love and confidence.

Mr. Cookman's success at Christ Church may be inferred from the fact that at the close of the first year he reported to the Conference an increase from ninety to one hundred and thirty-two members, and twenty-six probationers. He had collected for missions \$738, and \$300 for the Bible cause, exceeding by far all former contributions.

At the ensuing Conference Mr. Cookman was selected to make a missionary address, in connection with Dr. J. P. Durbin. It is said that these two men "electrified the audience." One, in describing the meeting, says they "were two of the most powerful speakers to which it has ever been my privilege to listen." The same writer says: "Cookman is a gifted son of eloquence, and nature has given him a most exuberant fancy. His speeches abound in the most gorgeous imagery, and in this respect he is said to resemble his distinguished father." "Mr. Cookman's speech might be said to abound in lightning flashes of genius, which Dr. Durbin followed in one continued thunder-roll of ponderous thought."

The same writer, speaking of Mr. Cookman's Sabbath sermon in the Presbyterian Church, says: "We would as soon think of daguerreotyping the storm, or with a feeble voice of imitating the roar of thunder, as to undertake to convey to our readers the impression made by Cookman's sermon. Certain we are that of all who heard it, no one will forget it."

There is no doubt that Mr. Cookman's youthful appearance contributed to the enthusiasm with which his efforts were received; but back of all this there must have been real worth. He seemed to do everything for the Lord Jesus, and to do it with all his strength. He seems to have kept his all upon God's altar, ready for sacrifice or service. At the close of his first sermon in Christ Church, from the text, Galatians vi, 14, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," a brother, a member of the Church, was asked, on coming out, what he thought of the sermon. "Ah," said he, "there is no German silver about that -- it has the true ring of the genuine metal." "His whole work in Pittsburgh," says one, "was admirable in every way. He was in every sense a Methodist, but he was not a narrow denominationalist, and, above all, he had nothing in his heart to keep him from rejoicing in the success of another's work." "The more I knew him," says one, "the more I loved him. He walked with God."

On Mr. Cookman's leaving Pittsburgh, a daily city paper speaks of his work thus: "Rev. Alfred Cookman has been with us two years, yet in that short time he has indelibly impressed us with his sincerity as a Christian, his worth as a gentleman, and his ability as a pulpit orator. To his value as a Christian, his life and zeal in the cause he assumes testifies. Of his worth as a gentleman, the many and warm attachments formed during his short residence with us are the assurances. Of his ability as an orator, the large and discriminating audiences which have attended him are the very best evidences." He left the city with his family at midnight. But even at this unseasonable hour the friends were so much attached to him, and the feeling so intense at parting with him, that they formed a procession, and accompanied him and his family to the station, where they bade them an affectionate adieu as they took the train for Philadelphia.

In 1857, Cookman was transferred back to the Philadelphia Conference, at the request of the Conference, and stationed at Green Street, Philadelphia. Green Street Church was new, the seats were free, and, located in the midst of a dense population, it was well adapted to a preacher of the popular talent that Mr. Cookman had the reputation of possessing, and really did possess.

Dr. H. B. Ridgaway, speaking of Mr. Cookman's two years' pastorate at Green Street Church, says, "It is doubtful if Philadelphia Methodism has known in its whole history a pastoral term of two years more signally fraught with proofs of Divine favor and the stable results of evangelical ministrations than those of our friend at Green Street." He further declares that the "scenes under his preaching -- the perpetual blaze of revival, the marked cases of conversion and sanctification -- were more like the occurrences of primitive Methodism, and showed conclusively that the ancient glory had not departed from the sons of the fathers."

Let it be remembered that at the close of his second year he reported no less than seven hundred members, and one hundred and fourteen probationers -- two hundred and thirty-five net gain. It is true that this increase took place in 1857 and 1858, during the great awakening. But Alfred Cookman was the man to take advantage of this spirit of almost universal awakening, and press sinners to Christ. It will be remembered that it was while at Green Street he received a most satisfactory renewal of the blessing of entire sanctification, which for years he had failed to enjoy. He says, ten years later, "Eternal praises to my long-suffering Lord, ten have elapsed since, as pastor of Green Street Church, in the city of Philadelphia, I again carefully and fully dedicated my all to God; the consecration included, of course, the doubtful indulgence" (tobacco) Dr. Ridgaway says:

"The tobacco test was for himself alone; the use of tobacco was in his way. He did not pretend to raise it as a test for anyone else." We cannot believe that Alfred Cookman would care to have the matter put in this form. It is true that he did not denounce those who indulged in the use of tobacco as sinners above all men because they did such things. But he did not believe that an enlightened Christian could practice smoking or chewing tobacco and enjoy the blessing of entire sanctification. From what we know of Mr. Cookman's teachings on this subject, we are sure we state his exact views. Let no one say that "if so holy a man as Alfred Cookman did not object to the use of tobacco, then I may use it." He did object to the use of tobacco, and his whole spiritual nature revolted at the idea of a man claiming to be pure in heart, and still held by the power of this habit.

A new light had fallen upon him, and a new power possessed him, and from this time until he "swept through the gates, washed in the blood of the Lamb," "heart purity" was his theme. His ablest sermons were from this time on this subject. "His whole being was permeated with its unction; at home or abroad, in the pulpit or the social circle, in the study or by the seashore, at the altar of prayer or by the sick-bed, the instinct of his soul, the atmosphere of his life was holiness unto the Lord."

It was during his ministry at Green Street that his brother George, often referred to in these pages, was converted, and became an honored, worthy member of the Church. He was a man of deep piety and an earnest worker. His career was short, but he lived and died well. Nothing in Alfred's ministry gave him greater joy than the salvation of his most dearly loved brother George. An intelligent member of the Green Street Church was asked by a member of the Conference what was the secret of Cookman's success. His answer was, "His evident desire to do the people good."

The next appointment of Alfred Cookman was the Union Church, on Fourth Street, Philadelphia. This was in 1859. It was the oldest Methodist Church in the city, except St. George.

It was located in the business portion of the city. But notwithstanding all these disadvantages, it was even then regarded as a strong Church. There were many influential families connected with the Church; but they came from a distance, preferring to remain with the old rather than connect themselves with new organizations. The popularity of Mr. Cookman was soon felt in the increase of the congregations. It is said by one of the leading members of the Church, "Mr. Cookman was received at Union with open arms and open hearts." This was the Church home of his honored mother, who now received the Word of God with gladness from lips she had taught to lisp the name of Jesus. Here, too, was his bosom friend, Rev. Andrew Longacre, now laid aside by feeble health. Here, also, was Mrs. John Keen, in whose home a meeting for "holiness," which had been established by her mother, was the rallying point for the lovers of holiness. It seemed almost an Eden to Alfred, who had so recently regained his lost blessing, and gloried in its possession. Some idea of his power as a preacher at this time may be gathered from a report of a sermon preached at Penn's Grove Camp-meeting, New Jersey, by his friend, Andrew Longacre. His text was, "Thy will be done." Mr. Longacre says: "The collection preceded the sermon, and it left the congregation a good deal unsettled. But at the first sound of his voice all was hushed into attention, and the whole vast throng was bathed in tears. People wept aloud, and preachers crowded the stand and the passers-by on the edge of the circle. Near me was seated a traveling preacher of the Hicksite Friends. He had been restless at first, but gradually seemed subdued by the power of the preacher, until at the conclusion he stood up and cried with a loud voice, as if yielding to the constraining influence of the Spirit, 'We have heard the gospel preached in demonstration of the Spirit and power.' We went to the tables right after the service, but for many minutes those at the table could not eat. We sat looking at each other, and weeping tears that could not be controlled."

In this spirit Alfred Cookman preached and labored to win men to God, not counting any sacrifice too great that he might finish his course with peace, and the ministry committed to him.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 12

### PASTOR AND PREACHER -- (Continued)

Alfred Cookman's term of service closed at the Union Church in the spring of 1861. The unprecedented wave of revival influence which made his ministry at Green Street such a remarkable success had passed, and no such results could have been reasonably expected at the Union. But his ministry was not wanting in fruitage. Many were added to the Church, but it was more gradual. The additions were in small numbers.

But the time had come for his removal, and the calls for his services were numerous. Among them came an urgent petition from New York City, and in response to this call he was transferred to the New York Conference, and stationed at Central Church, on Seventh Street, New York City. This Church seemed to have a special claim upon him. It was the same society which had, in 1841, secured the services of his honored father when he should return from England. It is not surprising that they should now seek the services of his noble son, who was standing in the front ranks of the successful ministers of the Church. Mr. Cookman's first year at Central Church was the year of the outbreak of the Rebellion, and was, in all respects, a most trying time. The war spirit seemed to dominate all other interests. The whole land seemed a military camp. The Sabbath



was mainly neglected, and amid such scenes it is no wonder that churches were deserted, congregations limited, and the revival spirit repressed. But this state of things did not long continue. After the first blaze of Northern patriotism had spent its force, the people, finding that war had become a matter of fact, a real, stern reality, and that it was not all victory, but at times signal defeat, began to return to the churches. It was felt that an appeal to God for help was a necessity. Then the churches were again filled.

In the midst of these conflicts, Alfred Cookman stood his ground. His sermons were full of patriotism, but Christ was made the one central thought, His heart was in fullest sympathy with the North in its struggles against the slave power, and in his sermons and speeches he sought to keep alive in the hearts of the people faith, first in God, and then faith in the American Republic.

Mr. Cookman's voice was soon heard in the Fulton Street noonday prayer-meeting. No one was more welcomed than he.

It was natural that Alfred Cookman should early become interested in the Sing Sing camp-ground. He writes to his wife, who, with the children, was at her father's home in Columbia, Pa., while he had been at Sing Sing: "We had a glorious work. O, I can never forget it! The camp has been only outside of heaven itself. Meetings powerful and blessed." Speaking of his sermon at the camp-meeting, he says:

"In the evening your poor, unworthy husband preached on 'Redeeming the time.' O, how much oppressed in view of my fearful responsibility! But, glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Divine strength was made perfect in my weakness, and I think that never have I preached so much in the demonstration of the Spirit. Sinners were smitten on the right hand and on the left. The altar and tents were occupied with penitents and praying Christians; many souls were converted. One gentleman of forty years of age was converted while I preached. Not unto me, not unto me; but unto my blessed Savior shall be all praise and glory, now and for evermore."

Alfred Cookman found in New York what his soul yearned for -- a meeting for the, special promotion of holiness, conducted by Dr. and Mrs. Palmer. Here great and good men and women, of all denominations, met to enjoy the fellowship of saints. Alfred Cookman received from week to week in this meeting, great spiritual profit. The testimonies were especially helpful. His presence also contributed, not a little, to the interest of these meetings.

Mr. Cookman's pastorate at the Central Church closed in the spring of 1863. But not without deep regret on the part of the people. He was beloved by all as a man of God.

His next pastorate was in the same city, Trinity Church, on West Thirty-fourth Street. The Church to which he was appointed knew him to be pronounced on two questions -- the war, and the subject of holiness.

The war was still raging, and every effort was being made to relieve the sufferings of our soldiers who were at the front and in the hospitals.

The Christian Commission had been organized, with the object of carrying comfort to the bodies and minds of our suffering soldiers. Christian ministers by hundreds volunteered their services for a given time, and worthy laymen joined them in these acts of mercy. The good accomplished by these worthy, unselfish men of God will not be fully known until the books are finally opened. Mr. Lincoln, in addressing a company of these ministers, in our presence, said, "Gentlemen, you are the only men who have called on me that did not want something." Mr. Cookman offered his services to the Christian Commission. They were accepted. He left home about the 20th of February, 1864, and returned to his charge the 24th of March, having spent his time in Washington and Brandy Station, etc. He was much of the time with the New York Heavy Artillery, and at the headquarters of the Reserve Artillery. His correspondence to his wife and family shows how deeply he was interested in the work. An extract from a letter to his wife will indicate the work which most interested him. He says: "I have been writing this morning a letter to a wife who resides at Garrison Station, on the line of the Hudson River Railroad. Last night her husband was powerfully converted. The case is thrillingly interesting. Two weeks since he tore himself from a dear, pious, and faithful wife and three beloved children. His companion remonstrated with tears in her eyes. Still he enlisted. After great hardships, he reached this camp on Wednesday morning. In the evening he came to the tent. The preached word affected his heart, and he rose for prayers. All day yesterday he was a subject of powerful awakening. Last evening, during our experience meeting, he rose up (a noble-looking man) and, with tears running down his cheeks, said: 'O, fellow-soldiers, how much I want to be saved! All day I have been wrestling with conviction. Now I yield, I yield; I can hold out no more. I am resolved to seek and serve God. O, won't you please pray for me?' I dropped on my knees, and poured out my soul in importunate pleading. All the soldiers were wonderfully interested and engaged. Prayer finished, the soldier rose again, and said, 'Fellow soldiers, I must tell you I believe God has heard and answered my prayer. The love of Jesus is shed abroad in my heart. I am happy in God. I came to be a soldier of the Nation -- now I am, in addition, a soldier of Jesus. When we were coming here, very many of our company were sorry that they had enlisted; but if you will enlist in the service of Jesus, you will never be sorry.' Thereupon, another soldier sprang to his feet, and said: 'I will enlist tonight. Two of my children are in heaven. I want to meet them there, and I intend to march with that dear man. Here, fellow soldiers, I enlist tonight.' I can give you no idea of the meeting. It was wonderful, glorious, surpassing anything I ever witnessed. My own soul is richly baptized. I lay down on my bed with a heart melting in gratitude before God."

Mr. Cookman was at home in this sort of work, and this is a sample of the work he did among the soldiers. "I am sustained," he says, "Thy the conviction that I am in the line of duty, and God strengthens and blesses me." To his sister Mary, he writes: "God keeps my soul in peace. When I walk these hills alone, I feel I am not alone. My Heavenly Father vouchsafes me his presence, and I am allowed precious communion with himself. Our meetings are largely attended, and decidedly interesting. Every night there are some new cases of awakening and conversion. On Tuesday evening, beside the number who rose for prayers; four noble soldiers stood up and asked prayers of all present. Two of them professed to find Jesus before the close of the meeting. O, how much I wish you could enjoy one of these experience meetings!" In this manner the work went on.

It was at Trinity that Mr. and Mrs. Cookman suffered their first bereavement, in the death of their little daughter Rebecca, but three and a half years old. She was absent from home when she died, staying with her grandfather at Columbia. "We were exceedingly shocked at the

announcement of her death," writes Mr. Cookman to his friend, Mrs. Skidmore; "for, although we had heard of her sickness, we had no idea that she was seriously or dangerously ill. The little representative of Central Church is the first taken from our domestic circle. O, how real and blessed the eternal home seems this evening! My dear wife is overwhelmed with sorrow. Nevertheless, she submits uncomplainingly to this providence of our faithful God."

Writing to his sister Mary, he says, "We have just been placing in the cold grave another beautiful gem, to develop and reappear in the promised resurrection." "I have many times sought," he says, "to comfort bereaved parents. God, by his providence, has been better preparing me for this part of my ministerial duty."

Mr. Cookman's pastorate at Trinity closed in 1864, and he accepted a pressing invitation to return to Philadelphia, where his services were sought for a new church which had been erected on Spring Garden Street. We need not refer to the correspondence which led to his return to the city he so much loved, and in which were so many of his dearest friends. Mr. Cookman was pastor of Spring Garden Street for three years, and his ministry in that new and attractive church was as great a success as in any pastorate of his ministry. He was never more popular with his people, and never exerted a more salutary influence in the community. He was in the prime of his manhood and the height of his usefulness. His congregation welcomed him with open arms. His church was admirably located, and ably manned by intelligent and energetic laymen, and success seemed assured from the beginning. Mr. Cookman was well and personally known in the city by all. His name was already a tower of strength. He at once established a meeting in his church for the promotion of holiness. This meeting was subsequently removed, by his consent; to the Methodist Bookroom on Arch Street, where it has remained to this day. Mr. Cookman continued to conduct the meeting while he remained in Philadelphia. His first year in Spring Garden Street was full of excessive toil and unprecedented usefulness. Fears were entertained that his abundant labors were too great a draft on his vital energies, but he seemed in perfect health. On his return, in 1866, from the Conference, he seemed full of evangelistic zeal. He is away to help his brother John, at Poughkeepsie, in a revival, his brother suffering from an attack of diphtheria. His vacation is spent at the camp-meetings, urging the people to the enjoyment of full salvation. "What is the use of giving you a vacation?" said one of his official brethren; "you don't rest; you go to all the camp-meetings, and preach more than if you were at home. I cannot favor it unless you will rest." His reply was: "I cannot accept a vacation on such conditions. I must preach. The gospel is free." Mr. Cookman's health seemed unimpaired, and with him preaching was a pleasure, and laboring for the salvation of souls was rest. He had learned the meaning of that line, "Labor is rest."

Wherever he went, light was diffused, power fell on the people, and there was great rejoicing. He says, on returning to his charge, "It was the most delightful holiday of my life." He was at Shrewsbury camp-meeting for three days, and pronounces them "three of the greatest and most glorious days of my life." He preached at the last-named camp a sermon on entire sanctification. "The illumination and unction," he says, "vouchsafed were, I think, unprecedented in my history. O, what power I had in appealing to the preachers! Hundreds of people bowed in consecration!"

In 1867, Mr. Cookman's last year in Spring Garden Street, the National Camp-meeting movement was inaugurated, an account of which, with Mr. Cookman's relation to it, are given in other chapters.

There were three events occurring during this year which deeply affected Mr. Cookman: First, the death of Bishop Simpson's son Charles; second, the death of his eldest brother George; and finally, the death of his eldest son, Bruner. His brother George was converted under the ministry of Alfred in Philadelphia. His death occurred October 1, 1867. Few hearts were ever more closely united than were these brothers. From the time of his conversion, George Cookman became one of the most earnest, devoted Christian men in Philadelphia. As a member, first of Green Street, and then of Arch Street, of which he was one of the founders, he was a leader in every good work. He was Sunday School superintendent, trustee, steward, class-leader, exhorter, and leader of Church music. He was president of the Young Men's Christian Association, as successor of George H. Stuart; a manager of the American Sunday School Union, manager of the Philadelphia Tract Society, etc. George Cookman was a well-rounded man, as well as a Christian of whom none were ashamed. In a letter to his bosom friend, Rev. Andrew Longacre, Alfred says:

"I mourn the loss of one of the sweetest and best of brothers. The earthward side of this dispensation is desolate beyond expression. I find my soul, however, singing,

'Jesus, brother of my soul,  
Let me to thy bosom fly.'

There I hide my crippled wing, and realize the comfort that the Divinity supplies. Pray for me."

The last testimony of this good man, given in an experience-meeting, on the Wednesday evening before he died, was that he was physically feeble, and could not say much, but his experience might be expressed in that beautiful stanza:

"'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,  
Whose Spirit shall guide me straight home;  
I'll praise him for all that is past,  
And trust him for all that's to come."

George died well. Death found him at his post, faithfully discharging his duties.

And now, March 2, 1868, his firstborn, Alfred Bruner Cookman, is removed by death. He had been a light in the home for nearly sixteen years. He was a good Christian boy, had been converted, and was doing all a boy could do to maintain a Christian life. He gives this account of his conversion, January 8, 1865: "Today I have experienced religion. In the afternoon I went up to the altar, but did not find Christ. In the evening I found him. Glory to God!" He was a child of feeble constitution, but his associates all said of him, "Alfred Bruner Cookman is a good boy -- good at school, good on the street, good at play, good in his words, good in his temper, good in his actions." "And so he was," said his father.

"None knew him but to love him,  
None named him but to praise."

It was a sad blow to the home. Mother and father felt the bereavement as only good parents do when the firstborn is taken. "Our glorified boy!" says Mr. Cookman. "We praise God for the temporary loan. It made earth more beautiful. It makes heaven more attractive." The three years of pastoral labor in the Spring Garden charge closed in 1868. Between the conflicting claims of St. John's Church, Brooklyn, and Grace Church, Wilmington, Delaware, Mr. Cookman was severely pressed. Both churches were new, and offered equal attractions. Grace Church had the advantage of being in his own Conference. The bishops finally decided the matter in favor of Grace Church. His three years' pastorate in Wilmington was marked with his usual success. Immediately his ministry became attractive to all classes, and his Church was speedily filled. Among his first efforts was the establishment of a meeting for the promotion of holiness. There were some who were of opinion that he might be urging the subject unduly, and that it would interfere with his popularity. To this he answered: 'O, the Lord Jesus has my reputation in his keeping. I have committed it all to him, and he will take care of it.'" There were many in his Church who at first were not prepared to accept his views on the subject of holiness, but who, finally, received them experimentally, and became his warmest friends. The people loved him with an intense love for the good they had received under his ministry. Writing to his wife, who had not yet arrived, of his first Sabbath, he says: "It was a glorious day; congregation magnificent; sacrament the most blessed service of that kind I have enjoyed for years. Friends seemed in highest spirit, and my soul praises God." Very soon after entering upon his labors, his spirit became diffused through his congregation, and a revival commenced, which continued through the entire term of his pastorate. This blessed work of God included the justification of sinners, and the entire sanctification of believers. "I believe," says one of his members, "that eternity alone will reveal the good he accomplished at Grace."

In the spring of 1869, Mr. Cookman was invited to take part in the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in the city of Washington, D. C., on the 10th and 11th of January. Able representatives of the Church were present, and made long and labored addresses on the occasion. Alfred Cookman was the last speaker. The hour was late, the people were weary, and the prospect was not hopeful for any man. Mr. Cookman, in his opening remarks, said: "And now, sir, looking around upon the field, I do not seem to see a standing stalk of truth. These brethren, with their bright blades or their keen sickles, have been getting the harvest -- they have even carried it to the mill. They have ground it out in their close, clear, vigorous thinking. They have manufactured it into nourishing and delightful food. It has been dealt out among the people, and in the morning and in the evening you have been enjoying it, and are now satisfied. It seems to me that it only remains for me to return thanks and go home. O, sir, if I may change the figure, I have thought during the evening, while occupying my seat, that we have been engaged during the day in the inspection of our great missionary ship, its keel, its timbers, its planking, its deck, its machinery -- a most magnificent piece of machinery -- its pilotage, and its Leader. Our flags are flying, our officers are in their places, and all that we are needing, as it would seem, is the missionary spirit, which might be entitled the motive power." He then dwelt on the missionary spirit. A correspondent of the Christian Advocate wrote, "The address was pervaded by the blessed spirit of the Master, and at times, in rapt delight, the audience wept and

rejoiced; and when the speaker closed his remarks, all present must have felt that they had been with him at the feet of Jesus, receiving inspiration and comfort for future effort."

At the General Conference of 1868, the Philadelphia Conference was divided, and the Wilmington Conference was formed, and now Alfred Cookman found himself in another than the Philadelphia Conference. But he continued in the work at Grace Church until his term expired. His labors during this period were prodigious. His services at the three great National Camp-meetings -- Hamilton, Oakington, and Des Plaines; his management of the Peninsula Methodist Convention, Ennall's Spring Camp, etc., must have pressed him beyond measure. His closing address at the Methodist Convention, "though impromptu," says Rev. G. H. Lightbourne, "was one of the most beautiful and thrilling to which I ever listened." The pastor of the West Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, gives this testimony of Mr. Cookman's work:

"Perhaps no man ever exerted a wider or better influence in that community in the same time than did Alfred Cookman, and no man was more highly esteemed or more tenderly loved."

The Wilmington Commercial said, "It is with deep regret that his brethren of the Wilmington Conference part with him, and many of the laity will follow him with tearful eyes and prayerful wishes that they may meet again on this side the grave, and if not, that they may meet him in heaven."

One of the most touching scenes occurred at a meeting of the Society of Friends, at which Mr. Cookman was present for the last time. He was accustomed to attend these Wednesday afternoon meetings. The minister read for his lesson, Acts xx, 17: "And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he had spoken that they should see his face no more." Mr. Cookman was himself overcome by his emotions, and, with the whole audience, continued to weep for some time. So uncontrollable were their emotions that it was impossible for a time to proceed with the services. It seemed quite prophetic, as he never again visited that meeting.

In 1871, Alfred Cookman made his last move. It is true he had calls from Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Washington, and Newark; but Providence, no doubt, directed his appointment to Central Church, Newark, N. J., that he might receive his final translation in the midst of his friends. His appointment seems to have been in direct answer to prayer. Before he left Grace Church, and while he was not able to see clearly the path of duty, there was a little prayer-meeting of his special friends. They met to pray for Divine guidance. He was ready for any place, ready to suffer or to die for Jesus. It is said that the next morning, with one voice, they said, "Newark," and to Newark he went.

He was received by the members of his new field with the greatest cordiality, and everything was done to make him and his family comfortable and happy. Those who knew him best could see with great clearness that Alfred Cookman was increasingly intent on possessing more of the mind that was in Christ, and to be perfect as he is perfect, and to be enveloped constantly in an atmosphere of heavenly-mindedness. Such was Alfred Cookman as he entered upon his final pastorate. He seemed to be well characterized by the term saintliness. He may not have been impressed with this change; but those with whom he came in contact saw clearly the spirit of glory

and of God was resting upon him. He entered joyfully into every interest of his Church, and the people responded heartily to his earnest appeals to seek the promised power from on high. In the midst of these signs of great usefulness, the end came.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 13

### FINAL TRIUMPH: SWEEPING THROUGH THE GATES

The remark has often been made:

"What a misfortune to the Christian Church that Alfred Cookman should have been called away so early in life, in the forty-second year of his age! He had many years of active life before him, and the Church so much needed his services." We do not sympathize with this complaint. The Church has gained by his dying vastly more than she could have gained by his living. His dying song of victory will live long after all his labors have been forgotten.

Some men die old at thirty. Others are children at fourscore. The real fact is: "We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths; in feelings, not in figures on a dial. We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best; he whose heart beats quickest lives longest -- lives in one hour more than in years do some."

"The dead have all the glory of the world."

"If the sun were never to rise again," says old Jeremy Collier, "it would look grander to tumble from the heavens at midday, with all its light and heat, rather than gain a few hours, only to languish and decline."

"The last act of such a life is much like the last number of a sum, ten times greater than all the rest."

Rev. Thomas Walsh, of whom Mr. Wesley said, "Such a master of Bible knowledge I never saw before, and never expect to see again," and under whose ministry he claims that "more souls were converted than under the labors of any man of his time," died at the age of twenty-eight. But his influence still lives. Rev. John Summerfield, the most eloquent and effective preacher that ever stood in an American pulpit, and whose memory is as fragrant as "the rose of Sharon or the lily of the valley," and can never be dissipated, died at the age of twenty-seven. Rev. David Brainerd, whose self-sacrificing labor is an inspiration to every missionary of the cross, and of whom Bishop Hamline once said, "I would rather be David Brainerd, wrapped in my bearskin and spitting blood upon the snow, than to be Gabriel," died at the age of twenty-nine years. The influence of such a man must continue to be felt until "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ." Bishop Janes, in addressing some missionaries, said, in substance: "Go to your field of labor, and devote all your energies to save the heathen, and take the very first good opportunity to die and go to heaven." It is often true, "The good die first, and they whose hearts are dry as summer dust burn to the socket."

It is true, Alfred Cookman died comparatively young; but he lives in the love and admiration of God's people, and will while holiness is accepted as the "central idea of Christianity."

Mr. Cookman had reached the last milestone of his mortal life, and was now about to "languish into the life immortal." Such an end could not be said to be "languishing," except in the sense of the indescribable physical agonies which he suffered. As he approached the "Golden Shore," he had, like Stephen, visions of an open heaven. After a severe attack of physical agony had subsided, he had, or fancied he had, a remarkable vision. He was just inside the city of God. While there, he was first received by his Grandfather Cookman, who said: "When you were in England, I took great pleasure in showing you the different places of interest. Now I welcome you to heaven, washed in the blood of the Lamb." Then his father, whose features were as distinct as when he saw him in his boyhood, said: "Welcome, my son, washed in the blood of the Lamb!" Then his brother George clasped him as he arrived, and said, "Welcome, my brother, washed in the blood of the Lamb." Finally, his son Bruner received him with the same salutation, "Welcome, father, washed in the blood of the Lamb."

The saints of God have sometimes had such visions. They have come nearer than to say, "The holy ones, behold they come! I hear the noise of wings."

They have said: "Don't you see them? Don't you hear the music?" They sing:

"Bright spirits are from glory come;  
They're round my bed; they're in my room;  
They wait to waft my spirit home, --  
All is well."

Once reporting this dream, if one is pleased to call it a dream, to his wife, he said, "What an abundant entrance!" Notwithstanding these wonderful visions of heavenly life, and his manifest fitness for the place, he was often heard to repeat the words:

"I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all;  
But Jesus Christ is my all in all."

Like Wesley, he could say:

"I the chief of sinners am,  
But Jesus died for me."

When the faithful soul comes face to face with the realities of the last struggle, he sees nothing left to him but Jesus. His past faithfulness, his personal holiness, no matter how deep and complete; his abundant labors and marvelous fruitage in souls -- all these count for nothing in the presence of the Throne. He finds that "there is no way into the holiest of all but by the blood of Jesus."



Alfred Cookman, as he drew near the close of life, seemed more and more anxious that every movement lived, every word spoken, every meeting held, and every sermon preached, should bear the stamp of the Holy Spirit. They distilled fragrance that was everywhere felt. His spiritual-mindedness, during the last few weeks of his life exceeded by far any former period in his life.

"Sometimes," he said, "I think my work nearly done, and when I take my bed it may be the last sickness."

As late as the 18th of October, less than one month before his death, he attended the annual meeting of the National Association in New York. His soul seemed in a state of spiritual ecstasy. His heart was all on fire. As we walked along the street with him, he said: "Let me take your arm. My limbs trouble me, and I am weak." Though he seemed very feeble, we had no thought that death was so near. He made his last visit to his brother John, then stationed at West Twenty-fourth Street. He attended a love-feast two days before his final illness in Halsey Street Methodist Episcopal Church, Newark, and gave a clear, ringing testimony, relating his experience, especially on the subject of holiness, saying to two brothers who accompanied him home: "I know it is not popular to hold up the doctrine of holiness; but I thought I would do my whole duty then. I feel this may be my last opportunity." There is little doubt that he expected his end might be near.

Four days after he attended the annual meeting of the Association, he performed his last public service in his church, Sunday, October 22d. He was now about to do what he had many times, when in health, said he would like to do. "I would like to die, if it were God's will, with my armor on, and preach by my death as well as by my life." He would like to die as Rev. Dudley Tyng died, saying, "It was glorious to die as he did, for his dying testimony is yet echoing round the world." God gave him his desire, and his dying testimony, like Mr. Tyng's, is echoing round the world, and will continue to be heard while the annals of dying saints are read. The trembling believer will take courage by it as he approaches the "swellings of Jordan."

Mr. Cookman's text in the morning was from Mark iv, 25, "From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." It was a solemn, searching sermon. As evening approached he complained of not feeling well. "Mrs. Cookman was very anxious to secure some one to fill the pulpit for the evening service;" but he was not willing. "I think I have a message from God for this people. I shall preach from 'The faded leaf.'" He arose, holding in his hand a faded leaf, saying, "This is my text, 'We all do fade as a leaf.'" He seemed unlike himself, and several persons remarked to his wife that "He looked like one transfigured." One lady remarked to her husband that she "did not think that Fletcher could have looked more seraphic." As he passed from the pulpit, he handed the faded leaf to a friend, saying as he did so, "That leaf and the preacher are much alike -- fading." As he concluded his sermon his feet gave way, and it was with some effort that he limped from the pulpit to his home. As he reached the parsonage and met his anxious wife, he seemed almost distracted with pain. He was assisted to his chamber, saying to his wife, "I have preached my own experience tonight -- 'Fading as a leaf.'" A physician was summoned, who pronounced the disease "myalgia, or acute inflammatory rheumatism." The pain was confined to the ankles and the soles of the feet; but so intense was it that he remarked to us that it would have been a relief to place his feet in the fire. No language can describe the agony he suffered. Rev. L. R. Dunn says: "In attempting to describe his sufferings to me, he used the following language: 'If the bones of my feet

were all teeth, and each one had what we call the jumping toothache, it would give you some idea of what I suffer." He himself said that "while his whole physical nature was quivering with agony, his higher spiritual nature triumphed in God." He said to us: "In the midst of my most severe agonies, my soul has been so filled with God that for a time I quite forget the pain."

Mr. Cookman seemed hopeful of his recovery in the presence of his friends; but beneath all this hopeful exterior there seemed to be a conviction that his work was done. There was always an "if." After about a week of suffering, as above described, there came a lull, and he became hopeful and cheerful, and spent the time in reading, or being read to, and in writing brief letters to his friends. The comfort he found in reading the Word of God was very great.

The 29th of October, one week from the time he was prostrated, the members of his Church, who were very anxious, held a prayer-meeting to pray for his recovery. He dictated a note to the meeting: "This is a Sabbath of great physical suffering, and yet it is proving, doubtless in answer to your prayers, the most precious of all my life. I am Christ's suffering little child; amid the very sharp, keen, excruciating pain, I feel that Jesus presses me even more closely to his great heart of love, and lets me realize the power of his Divine sympathy and tenderness. God bless you all -- the kindest, dearest people that any pastor ever served."

Among the letters written in these intervals of suffering, he addressed some to his most intimate friends. We select portions from one written to Mrs. Abraham Bruner, his mother-in-law. Still confined to his bed, and has been for three weeks, he says: "For some months past I have been far from well; but at the close of my sermon on the evening of October 22d, I felt my feet giving way. I limped home, went to bed, and for nine days was almost distracted with what my physicians called myalgia, an acute form of inflammatory rheumatism. The pain was confined to my ankles and soles of my feet. It was just as if the back part of my feet were filled with teeth, and all at the same time affected with violent jumping toothache. This, of course, made my feet so sore that I could scarcely bear to have them touched. It so involved my whole nervous system that towards the last it was almost like convulsions. Only once have I sat up, and then returned to bed with a raging fever. Fever, bloody expectoration, sore throat, torpid liver, disordered kidneys, absence of appetite, hemorrhoids, and great weakness are my symptoms at present. My physician, a skillful and experienced practitioner, is very faithful in coming to see me twice a day. Then my precious wife (God bless her!) has been unremitting in her attentions. Day and night, like a loving angel, she has hovered over my pillow, studying my wants, anticipating my wishes. O, I can never repay her for her self-sacrificing and unwavering love! I fancy she looks thin through her constant nursing; but she would not permit any one to take her place, and I am sure I do not want any one else.

"Above all, my dear mother, I have had the precious Jesus with me every hour of my sickness. When my pains were most severe, he would let down upon my soul such a weight of glory that I was obliged to break forth in strains of praise and joy. O, precious mother, how invaluable is full salvation in suffering and in the prospect of eternity! To feel that the soul is washed in the blood of the Lamb, and to realize the perfect love that casts out all fear that hath torment! O, this is more than all the world beside!"

This epistle gives a graphic idea of the deep agonies he endured, and the rich and abundant blessing from God by which he was sustained. At times Mr. Cookman would break out and sing, "O, how I love Jesus!" or "Rock of Ages," etc.

We were invited to supply his pulpit Sabbath, November 12th. We called upon him with another brother on Saturday evening, and found him apparently improved, and quite hopeful. And while we prayed there seemed an unusual manifestation of the Divine presence. He was greatly comforted, and so were we. At the close of the Sabbath morning service we retired to the parsonage, and spent the afternoon with him. We need not say that it was a season never to be forgotten. We found "the chamber where the good man met his fate quite on the verge of heaven." "Darkness" often "shows us worlds of light we never saw by day." So Alfred Cookman's extreme physical sufferings had seemed to open to his sanctified vision the glories of that world where there is no more pain," and where "they die no more." His soul had been enraptured with the sight, that strong as were his attachments to earth, with wife and little ones whom he dearly loved clinging to him, he could say: "If Jesus should enter my room and ask, 'Will you have life or death?' I should say, 'Blessed Jesus, I have no choice. Do as it pleaseth Thee.' O, I am so sweetly washed in the blood of the Lamb!"

"I have tried," he said, "to lift up the banner of holiness, and now the sweet will of God is mine." To us he said: "I have tried to preach holiness. I have honestly declared it, and O, what a comfort it is to me now!" Again he said: "I have no regrets now. I have stood up for the right, though sometimes nearly alone." At another time he said to us, "I have been true to holiness, and now Jesus saves me fully." "I am washed and made clean."

These expressions tell, as nothing else could, how deeply he was impressed with the importance of the subject of personal holiness -- being washed in the blood of Jesus. His soul seemed all aflame to declare the boundless love of Jesus. He said: "If I should recover, I shall preach holiness as I never preached it before. I have such an experience!"

One of the brethren came in to see him, and remarked: "Why, my pastor, you are all fixed up -- collar and wrapper on." He replied: "Ah, your pastor has not much strength; the outward is failing; but all is right within."

We called upon him early Monday morning, and at once observed a marked change. He had failed much during the night, and it seemed evident that he was approaching the end, and so we remarked to Mrs. Cookman. I went directly to New York, to attend the Methodist Preachers' Meeting, where I met his brother John, and said to him: "If you desire to see Alfred alive, you had better go to Newark as soon as possible." He and his mother went immediately. To his wife Alfred said, "My dear, if the Lord should take me away from you, could you say, 'The will of the Lord be done?'" She replied: "I feel that you belong to the Lord. I have always felt so; but I do not believe he is going to take you away from me." He answered, "God's will is always right and best, dear." "But," she continued, "how can I live without you?" He replied: "Jesus can be everything to you. He has been with us in the past, and he will never leave nor forsake you. You know the Bible is full of promises for the widow and fatherless. Live a moment at a time, 'looking unto Jesus,' and then, if permitted, I will be with you often, and will be your guardian angel, and be the first to meet you at the heavenly gate."

While Mr. Cookman's mother was with him on Monday, his hand became paralyzed, and as he looked at it he said, "That hand seems paralyzed, but it belongs to Jesus." The very presence of God seemed to be there, so much so that his mother said: "Alfred, I feel it a privilege to be in this room; there is such a Divine influence. It seems like the gate of heaven." He replied, "Yes, there are heavenly visitants here."

To his brother John he said: "I am not afraid to die. Death is the gate to endless glory. I am washed in the blood of the Lamb." To his sister-in-law, Rebecca Bruner, who had just arrived, he said, "This is the sickest day of my life; but all is well." "If you forget everything else, remember my testimony, 'Washed in the blood of the Lamb.' Jesus is drawing me closer and closer to his great heart of infinite love." To his wife, he said: "I am Christ's little infant. Just as you hold your little babe to your bosom, so I am nestled close to the heart of Jesus."

Just before he lost consciousness, he said: "How sweet and quiet everything seems! I feel like resting now. I am sweeping through the gates, washed in the blood of the Lamb!"

Thus, surrounded by his sorrowing family and the trustees of his Church, he closed his eyes on earth, and about four hours later opened them to "behold the King in his beauty," November 13, 1871, in the forty-third year of his age.

Dr. Edward Payson said, just before his departure: "If my happiness continues to increase, I cannot support it much longer." Writing to his sister, he says: "The Celestial City is in full view. Its glories beam upon me; its breezes fan me; its odors are wafted to me; its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart." Again this holy man said: "O, what a blessed thing it is to lose one's will! Since I have lost my will I have found happiness. There can be no such thing as disappointment to me, for I have no desire but that God's will may be accomplished." Here is also an experience which closely resembles Alfred Cookman's, when Payson says that God, as a "Sun," has come so near and become so glorious "that the light is too dazzling for flesh and blood to sustain," he is but repeating Cookman's experience.

The news of Mr. Cookman's death spread rapidly, as on the wings of the wind, and wherever the news came there were sad hearts. The people were astonished, as few had known of his illness, and all who had were confident of his restoration. His name had become almost a household word, and the love for him was so universal that it seemed as if one of each household had been taken.

The funeral services took place in the Central Church, Thursday, the 16th, at three P. M., and on the following day, at the Union Church, Philadelphia. The Central was packed, until the people were obliged to turn away, not being able to gain admission. At least one hundred ministers were present. The church was deeply draped in mourning. The following persons took part in the services: Rev. S. Van Benschoten read Psalm xc. Rev. Dr. T. DeWitt Talmage read 1 Corinthians xv. The venerable Rev. Dr. J. S. Porter offered an appropriate prayer. The anthem, "Cast thy burden on the Lord," was sung with subdued and melting tenderness.

Bishop Simpson and the writer followed in addresses. Bishop Simpson's address has been referred to in these pages several times, and our prescribed limits do not permit its full insertion here. His opening words were: "How solemn is this moment of sorrow! With slow and measured steps we have entered the church, as though unwilling to disturb what might seem to be the slumber of a dear one. We have come to drop a tear; we have come to take a last look; we have come to gather around the form of a loved brother minister, and now a saint with the Lord Jesus. The assembling of such an audience is but a faint indication of the esteem and affection which a departed brother had gained for himself in the Church of Jesus Christ. Standing as we do at this time on the very verge of the grave, and looking, on the one hand, to the fleeting years we have to stay, and, on the other, to the eternity that stretches out to our view, how short life seems; how unimportant the transitory interests of life, and how grand and sublime the realities of life just beyond!" He further said:

"I have no words of eulogy today over our departed brother; but I do know that in the record of his life, the mind which was in our Lord Jesus Christ was made manifest, and he had, qualities worthy of our examination and imitation." The address was replete with touching references to his personal relations to the dear departed one, and delivered with subdued, melting pathos, as if the bishop were laboring to suppress his own deep emotions, while many in that vast throng could not control their deep grief.

We spoke of Alfred Cookman's relation to the cause of holiness and to the National Camp-meeting Association, the high esteem in which he was held by the brethren, and the sorrow they felt at their loss; that no one could take his place and do his work. It was in this address that we gave, for the first time, Alfred Cookman's dying acclaim, "I am sweeping through the gates, washed in the blood of the Lamb." Dr. (now Bishop) R. S. Foster, sitting in the front pew, could restrain his emotions no longer, and burst into a flood of tears, with which the people were in full accord. At the conclusion of the services at Central Church, the remains were removed to Philadelphia, accompanied by a large number of friends, and on the following day were taken to the Union Methodist Episcopal Church, where, in the presence of a great crowd of sympathizing friends, additional services were conducted.

The hymn, "Servant of God, well done," was read by Rev. J. Dickerson, the congregation singing. Rev. Dr. Pattison offered prayer. A Scriptural lesson was read by Rev. Dr. Suddards, of the Episcopal Church.

He followed with a brief address, paying a high tribute to the excellence of both father (George G. Cookman) and son. Rev. Andrew Longacre then delivered a very touching address upon the life and character of his lifelong friend.

Rev. Dr. Alday, the pastor of the Church, spoke of the last sickness of Mr. Cookman.

Then followed a most touching address by Dr. (now Bishop) Foster, of the Drew Theological Seminary, which we give in full. Bishop Foster said:

"If a stranger had heard these words of eulogy in regard to our departed brother, Rev. Alfred Cookman, he would have come to the conclusion that he of whom they were spoken was

either a most remarkable person, or that affection had warped the judgment so that an overestimate of his qualities had been uttered. But the words were just, as setting forth the character of our departed brother.

"It is rarely I feel embarrassed as I do in this presence; not the presence of this assembly, that does not embarrass me; but (pointing to the remains before him) because of this presence.

"Alfred Cookman belonged to a royalty. There are many royalties of earth; there is the royalty of genius; but I should not class our brother with these; he was not a genius. There is the royalty of intellect; of scientific research; of the power to unfold great doctrines and grasp great principles. Though a man of a beautiful mind, a clear and strong intellect, the range and sweep of his observation was not his most wonderful gift. There is a royalty of eloquence: our brother was not wanting in this; he seemed to belong to a race whose lips were strangely touched.

"But he belonged to a royalty rarer by far than any of these, -- the seraphic royalty of earth. He was not Pauline; but he was Johanne. He was the brother of John, who leaned upon the Master's breast, from whom he drew his inspiration. He belonged to the race of Fletcher and of Payson, -- the best and rarest royalty God has ever permitted to grace the earth.

"When the brother prayed that the mantle of Alfred Cookman might fall on us, I said, 'Amen, Lord Jesus.' Not his mantle of eloquence or pulpit power, so much as his great, magnanimous, holy, and sacred character.

"As my little boy brought the message of the death of Alfred Cookman to my lecture room, he knew how it would strike me; he knew he had ministered at the altar where his sainted mother and sister used to worship; so he said in a whisper, 'Father, Brother Cookman is dead.' O how it shocked me! I thought at once that the most sacred man I knew had gone away from us; and this is my testimony today. I have known the Church for thirty years; I have known the men of the Church during that time through all the episcopacy and ministry; and the most sacred man, I have known is he who is enshrined in that casket."

As the remains were viewed at the close of the services, tears fell plentifully as the people took their farewell look at their friend and brother, questioning whether they should ever again see so sacred a person.

Five of the class who joined the Philadelphia Conference with him in 1848 -- Messrs. Gillinger, Turner, Major, Dickerson, and Adam Wallace -- carried his body from the church to the hearse. The remains were then taken to Laurel Hill Cemetery, where the funeral service was read by Rev. W. L. Gray, and the hymn, "Rock of Ages," was sung, and the body was laid in its last resting-place, November 17, 1871, at the age of forty-three years, ten months, and nine days.

Memorial services were held in many of the Churches in Philadelphia; in Grace Church, Wilmington; Trinity Church, New York; and Central Church, Newark. The trustees of the Central Church placed at the right of their pulpit a Gothic marble tablet, with the inscription:

IN MEMORY OF REV. ALFRED COOKMAN.

BORN JANUARY 4, 1828.

DIED NOVEMBER 13, 1871.

He walked with God, and was not,  
for God took him."

Alfred Cookman rests from his labors, and his works follow him. He has already beheld the Lamb, through whose blood he was washed and made whiter than snow. His feet have pressed the golden pavements, no more to feel pain. He has tasted the fruit of the tree of life, which skirts the banks of the mystic river, whose leaves have healed all his diseases. He has looked upon the faces of the redeemed of all ages. He does not forget, nor regret, that holiness was his theme here, for it is in that world their daily song forever. He does not regret that the "blood of the Lamb" was his constant song, for by it he triumphantly swept through the gates, washed and made clean.

"O happy, happy soul!  
In ecstasies of praise,  
Long as eternal ages roll  
Thou seest thy Savior's face.  
Redeemed from earth and pain,  
Ah! when shall we ascend,  
And all in Jesus' presence reign  
With our translated friend?"

A beautiful tribute to the Rev. Alfred Cookman, by a now sainted soul, Mrs. Mary D. James:

Our Zion mourns today, and tears fall fast  
From stricken hearts. A prince in Israel --  
Beloved -- hath fallen! Hath fallen? Nay:  
called  
Up higher; to fill a nobler sphere.  
"The Lord  
Had need of him." Shall we repine?  
Why wonder that he called him home at noon?  
For had not then his full day's work been  
done?  
From early morn he toiled, and gathered  
sheaves, --  
More sheaves had garnered when he left the  
field  
Than many a laborer gathers in a day:  
So earnest in his work of winning souls!  
His love was such a burning flame,  
That Jesus wanted him to shine above;  
And, longing for companionship more close  
With one so dear, took him the earlier  
home.

So precious to the Son of God, he seemed,  
As the loved John, to lean upon his breast;  
For did we not behold the rays divine,  
Outbeaming, oft reflected in his face?  
And said to one another, "How he bears  
he image of the Heavenly!"  
His words --  
Such glowing words! -- from hallowed lips,  
Touched with the altar-fire, made "our heart"  
burn  
Within us." But the human we forgot;  
For he had hidden himself behind his Lord!  
"We saw no man, save Jesus only," there.  
'Twas love -- 'twas holy love -- his eloquence  
That charmed; a melting stream outflowing  
from  
A melted heart, as water from a living spring  
Flows ever sweet and pure.  
His source of power  
The "indwelling Holy Ghost," that moved, and  
thrilled,  
And won.  
His theme, the "cleansing Blood," --  
The "open Fountain" for polluted souls.  
And how they came and washed, and were  
made clean!  
His spirit, how serenely beautiful!  
So gentle, kind, and meek; "clothed with  
humility."  
How like the Blessed One of whom he  
learned!  
His life as a grand river, broad and deep;  
Its silvery waters flowing swiftly on  
In ministry of love, bearing rich freightage  
On its tide to bless the world.  
Glorious in triumph was his exit from  
Our shores, and his "abundant entrance"  
To the port of bliss, as echoed back  
His notes of victory:  
"I'm sweeping through  
The gates, washed in the blood  
Of the Lamb!  
Most precious theme! -- in life,  
In death -- the Blood, the cleansing Blood!  
Amid our tears, we join his victor song,  
And, one in spirit still, we're singing



Glory to the Lamb!"

\* \* \* \* \*

THE END