

A Venture  
of  
Faith

H. T. HAMBLIN

A Venture of Faith



# A Venture of Faith

LESSONS FROM  
THE LIFE OF GEORGE MULLER

By

Henry Thomas Hamblin

*"Love exacting nothing back, never knoweth  
any lack."*

H. T. HAMBLIN,  
Publisher,

BOSHAM . . . CHICHESTER . . . ENGLAND.

## Foreword

THIS little book, of unassuming origin, in that it consists of a series of lessons drawn from the life of one who died thirty years ago, possesses an importance out of all proportion to its appearance. It is indeed what it affirms to be, but yet how much more! It presents a definite teaching that reveals a personal illumination, understanding and experience, as well as being an interpretation of what George Muller stood for. Because of the one, there is the fine convincingness of the other. Moreover, the matter stands out in no wise disjointed, as a series of mere lessons might be, but it is a wise unfolding by this means of a body of spiritual doctrine, of great and of increasing importance to-day, and of still greater meaning for to-morrow. For it reveals an open door, when, through economic pressure, all other avenues may be shut. It is a notable advance forward in the expression of spiritual truth. And it is given with an unrivalled clarity and simplicity.

It shows that the life of faith, not in one way but in every way, is practicable and possible to-day. In the end it is the only practicable way. Also it is the open door through which the better than has ever been may come to be.

It is an enquiry and research into the nature of God's Providence, and how we may, and what is required of us to, realise it. That there is a divine Providence, attentive to our needs, caring for us, is no fanciful teaching, but a veritable truth. But



there is this proviso, that we fulfil our part, the best that we can render, that indeed we *live* the life of faith. Muller realised and practised it, and so may we. It matters not what our vocation may be; it applies to every manner of life, as it sincerely expresses.

To many, troubled and anxious about things, this word will come as a breath from the hills. It presents the beautiful, gladsome life of a full giving and receiving, free from anxiety. It is made ours by child-like certitude and confidence in Life's great good meaning and purpose, through that spiritual apprehension which is faith. The way is shown, and what is required of us, if we would approach this state.

Our life becomes open, through its every channel, unto the Life around. Our personal life is enriched, because in the degree of our faith, it becomes a centre, a fountain-centre of that universal Life out-flowing for the good of all. Its impulse is toward the oneness of all. Its emotion is the great Love. It cannot cease from blessing. As we, through faith, affiliate ourselves to That, so will we know its gladsome Life in us.

It is not merely that we are lifted out of the *impasse* of our difficulties, but that from that instant our lives become a ministry of service, and we would not wish it otherwise.

That this little book will prove an inspiration and help to many, is at once my prayer and belief.

RICHARD WHITWELL.

## Contents

### PART I.

|                               |     |     |     |     |    |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Introduction                  | ... | ... | ... | ... | 11 |
| I.—Early Life                 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 18 |
| II.—Cutting the Cables        | ... | ... | ... | ... | 25 |
| III.—He Renounces His Stipend | ... | ... | ... | ... | 31 |
| IV.—His Strength of Faith     | ... | ... | ... | ... | 41 |
| V.—Careful Stewardship        | ... | ... | ... | ... | 51 |
| VI.—Looking Unto God          | ... | ... | ... | ... | 58 |
| VII.—Faith Victorious         | ... | ... | ... | ... | 65 |
| VIII.—Stepping Forward        | ... | ... | ... | ... | 74 |
| IX.—The Motive of Service     | ... | ... | ... | ... | 83 |
| X.—The Blessing of The Lord   | ... | ... | ... | ... | 89 |
| XI.—“Paying Our Way.”         | ... | ... | ... | ... | 94 |
| XII.—Without Advertisement    | ... | ... | ... | ... | 94 |

### PART II.

#### THE PRINCIPLES OF GEORGE MULLER.

|  |     |     |     |     |     |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| I.—His Secret of Success                     | ... | ... | ... | ... | 103 |
| II.—God, the Source of Supply                | ... | ... | ... | ... | 106 |
| III.—The Practical Testing                   | ... | ... | ... | ... | 108 |
| IV.—The Necessity of Prayer                  | ... | ... | ... | ... | 110 |
| V.—Never Appealing for Help                  | ... | ... | ... | ... | 115 |
| VI.—Avoiding Debt                            | ... | ... | ... | ... | 124 |
| VII.—Never Making Known His Need             | ... | ... | ... | ... | 126 |
| VIII.—Always Going Forward To New Enterprise | ... | ... | ... | ... | 130 |
| IX.—Seeking Not His Own                      | ... | ... | ... | ... | 137 |
| X.—Fervent In Spirit, Serving the Lord       | ... | ... | ... | ... | 144 |
| XI.—Conclusion                               | ... | ... | ... | ... | 148 |

*"Do God's will as if it were thy will, and  
He will accomplish thy will as if it were His  
own."*

—RABBI GAMALIEL.

*"Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe."*

—PSALMS.

## Introduction

It is with feelings of great reverence that I am attempting to draw certain lessons from the life of this man of faith, George Muller, of Bristol. Let me first of all acknowledge my sources of information. They are as follows: *George Muller, of Bristol*,\* by Arthur T. Pierson, D.D., with an Introduction by James Wright; published in 1899 by James Nisbet & Co., Ltd., 21, Berners Street, London—and *The Life of George Muller, A Record of Faith Triumphant*, by William Henry Harding, published by Morgan and Scott, Ltd., 12, Paternoster Buildings, London, E.C.

For the information of those who are not acquainted at all with the life and work of George Muller, let it be said that he founded the famous Bristol Orphanages, and maintained them during his long life, during which time he made no appeal for funds, relying instead entirely upon faith and prayer. During this time no less than £1,380,000 (one million, three hundred and eighty thousand pounds sterling) was subscribed by the public for George Muller's work, all of which was sent in the form of free-will offerings. No one was ever asked to give, each one gave as he felt prompted. It is because his life proves again and again the power of faith, that we have been led to write this book. In the Introduction to his book Mr. Harding says: "This young Prussian . . . stood out against the whole world. He had no resources, no wealthy friends to guarantee over-

\* To be obtained from The Bible and Tract Depôt, Bristol.



drafts, no name of high lineage whereby to conjure support from society; it was solely in dependence upon God Himself that he ventured upon the wonderful career which has made his name everywhere honoured and loved by the children of faith."

The encouraging fact that impresses us, as we study the life of George Muller, is that he was no super man, but a very simple man, who did things which you and I can do, if we only will to do them. He was a right thinker though he probably did not know it. He never entertained thoughts of doubt, but filled his mind with thoughts of faith and confidence. He believed the truth about God, and refused to think any thoughts that were not in harmony with this truth. And, needless to say, he acted according to his thoughts, and was faithful to them.

H. T. H.

## A Venture of Faith.

### PART I.—CHAPTER I.

#### GEORGE MULLER'S EARLY LIFE.

*"Not as I will, but as Thou wilt."*

IN commencing this work, which I fear may prove fragmentary, and lacking in proportion and continuity—for such a great subject demands a far more competent pen than mine—it is my joy to testify to the uplifting and strengthening effect the study of these two biographies has brought to me. Especially while reading the one by Dr. Pierson has my soul been uplifted and my faith deepened and strengthened, in a way impossible to describe.

How true it is that God's ways are not man's ways, and that God's wisdom is foolishness to man. If human wisdom had had to select a man to fill the unique position which George Muller afterwards occupied it would not have chosen George Muller. But the ways of God are wonderful, past all finding out, and beyond all human wisdom. It pleased God to choose George Muller, drunken, dissipated, dishonest, mean, underhand, deceitful youth though he was, according to his own accounts, and to entrust

to him a work of faith and devoted service, such as is almost without equal in all the annals of Christian work and service. George Muller, in his early days, according to his own tale of himself, was a "bad lot." He robbed his father, he deceived him with a whole chain of lies, he lived riotously and fraudulently at hotels, and finally got put into gaol. So unregenerate indeed was he that it seemed as if he had some queer psychological kink or twist, some peculiar criminal tendency, which must assuredly bring him down at length to the gutter, and possibly to a felon's grave. No Psychologist would have been able to do anything at all for George Muller, of that I am sure. He was one of those cases which baffle treatment entirely. An eminent Psychologist once confessed to me that it is impossible to do anything to restrain and reform certain cases. He acknowledged that the only thing that could entirely change the character, in such cases, would be that process known as being "born again."

This is just what took place in George Muller's experience. One evening he was persuaded to attend a meeting held at the house of a worthy but uneducated man, Wagner by name. This made such an impression upon him that he never was the same again. From that time he began to live the regenerate life. "That Saturday evening in November, 1825, to this young student of Halle, was the parting of the ways. He had tasted that the Lord was gracious, though he himself could not account for the new relish for divine things which made it seem too long to wait a week for another meal; so that thrice before the Saturday following he sought the house of Brother Wagner, there, with the help of brethren, to search the Scriptures." Dr.

Pierson says further: "We should lose one of the main lessons of this life-story by passing too hastily over such an event as this conversion and the exact manner of it, for here is to be found the first great step in God's preparation of the workman for his work." Those of us who have passed through a similar experience, as that of young George Muller, must thankfully and gratefully acknowledge how wonderful is the love and wisdom of God in making arrangements, if we may so speak, to win us from our lives of crookedness and folly, and draw us unto Himself, where alone we can be happy and satisfied. He even makes use of our lusts and excursions into sin to bring about our regeneration. God does not will us to sin, for we are enticed and led astray by our own lusts and the deceitfulness of our own hearts, but the Spirit makes use of the misery into which our sins land us, so that through our suffering, disappointment and disillusionment we may at length turn to God. We seek satisfaction in the baubles of the world, yet we discover no satisfaction at all, but only disappointment and despair. Finding no solace anywhere, we at last turn to Reality where alone true satisfaction may be found. Then, like Francis Thompson, we realize that Divine Love has been pursuing us all our days. Because it is Love, it allows us full liberty of choice; it does not compel. it only draws us by its very nature. Because it is Love, we must surely give in, sooner or later, for who can withstand Love for ever!

From now onwards life prepared young Muller for the great work to which he was later to be called. He had to learn to trust God for material supplies, as well as for power with which to overcome his crooked and profligate propensities. George, filled with new zeal, wanted to be a missionary, but, says



Dr. Pierson, "his father was not only much displeased, but greatly disappointed, and dealt in reproaches very hard to bear. He reminded George of all the money he had spent on his education in the expectation that he would repay him by getting such a living as would insure to the parent a comfortable home and support in his old age; and greatly angered, he exclaimed that he would no longer look on him as a son. Then, seeing his son unmoved in his quiet steadfastness, he changed tone, and his threats became tears of entreaty which were much harder to resist than reproaches. The result of the interview was a significant step in preparation for his son's life mission. That great resolve to follow the Lord's leading at any cost, was unbroken, but George Muller now clearly saw that he could be independent of man only by being more entirely dependent upon God, and that henceforth he should take no more money from his father. To receive such support meant obedience to his wishes, for it seemed plainly wrong to look to him for the cost of his training when he had no prospect or intention of meeting his known expectations. If he was to live on his father's money, he was under a tacit obligation to carry out his plans and seek a good living at home. Thus early in life George Muller learned the valuable lesson that one must preserve his independence if he would not endanger his integrity.

"God was leading His servant in his youth to cast himself upon Him even for temporal supplies. This step was not taken without counting the cost, for the two years yet to be spent at the University would require more outlay than during any time previous. But thus early did he find God a faithful Provider and Friend in need. For shortly after, certain American gentlemen, three of whom were

college professors, being in Halle and wishing instruction in German, were recommended to employ George Muller as tutor; and the pay was so ample for the lessons taught them and the lectures written out for them, that all wants were more than met."

But not only had young Muller to learn to trust God entirely for a temporal supply, but he had to learn how to be led by the Spirit. He learned the first lesson more easily and quickly than he did the second. He wanted to become a missionary, but not yet having fully realized the rules governing the Spirit-led life, he was in too much of a hurry. He felt he must push on, force the pace, and hustle, as men of the world do. We are all guilty of this in our salad days. We say: I *must* do this, or I *must* do that, and then, if the way does not open, we try to force things, with most painful results. One of the saddest sights is the man who thinks, and perhaps, unwisely declares, that he has a great work to do for God, and that he must get on with it. So he goes rushing about the world breaking down opposition, forcing his way here, there, and everywhere, meeting with trouble and difficulty at every turn. But if instead of all this he were to realize that he has no great work to do at all, but that the work is the Lord's—and that if he be sufficiently humble and modest he may be allowed to share in it, if and when the Lord's plans are ready—he would experience no difficulty at all, but only harmonious progression and true success and achievement.

Young Muller was not egoistic and he was not misled into thinking that he had a great work to do for God, yet he was very eager to be used in the missionary field. Mature disciples at Halle advised him however to wait quietly for divine guidance. But

he was too impatient to wait for the right moment which alone is the right time to go forward. He cast lots in the matter, and accordingly applied to the Berlin Missionary Society, but contrary to his expectation, he was not accepted. "Thus," says Dr. Pierson, "a higher Hand had disposed while man proposed. God kept out of the mission field, at this juncture, one so utterly unfit for His work that he had not even learnt that primary lesson that he who would work for God must first wait on Him and wait for Him, and that all undue haste in such a matter is worse than waste. . . . He, George Muller, learnt thus two lessons, which new dealings with God more and more deeply impressed upon him: First, that the safe guide in every crisis is believing prayer in connection with the word of God; Secondly, that continued uncertainty as to one's course is a reason for continued waiting."

Later, George Muller could plainly see that if he had been allowed to act according to the lot-drawing result, his choice would have been a life-mistake. He wanted to go as a missionary to the East Indies, but his repeated offers met with as many refusals. He was prevented from going because God had a different plan for him. Life was preparing Muller even for a larger and greater witness than ministering to the heathen.

This early experience of George Muller is the same as the experience of each of us who endeavours to live according to the leading of the Spirit. The way of the Spirit is always harmonious. Any other way is filled with difficulty and disorder. We can find the way of the Spirit only by waiting for the leading of the Spirit. If the way opens harmoniously, and we are conscious of the divine leading, then we may safely go forward, quietly and humbly, depend-

ing wholly upon God for strength, wisdom and guidance. If, however, we find our way blocked, and if we have no conscious leading of the Spirit, we must not force matters on any account, but must wait until the way is open, and we become conscious of the divine leading. The advice of all who are mature in the life of dependence upon God is: When in doubt, wait.



PART I.—CHAPTER II.

CUTTING THE CABLES.

*“Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.”*

THE first chapter dealt in part with George Muller's first demonstration of the power of God to provide daily material supplies. His experience has to be our experience also, because it is not sufficient that we believe such a thing to be possible; for we have also to prove it by practical experiment, if we are really to *know* it. It is only that which we really *know* in the depth of our being, by sheer *knowing*, apart from mere intellectual belief, that is truth, to us. The only way to *know* truly is through practical experiment and experience. Theory and speculation, if they are not followed by trial and demonstration, are useless. George Muller would never have become the man of faith he ultimately became, nor would he have been able to accomplish the work which he later achieved, if he had not made the stand that he did, by the doing of which he demonstrated that there is a spiritual law governing temporal supply. He proved, as others have proved, and are proving, that the source of man's material supply is spiritual, that its origin is God. He discovered that there is a higher law than the material

and economic, which, if trusted, will bring to us, through service, all that we need.

Many of my readers I am sure believe this to be true. There are some however who not only believe it, but who also *know* it. They *know* it, because they have proved it. They *know* that they can never lack any good thing. All fear and anxiety on this point have for ever passed away. But to the majority it remains a mere belief, and is not a truth which they *know* in their heart of hearts. This is because either they have not accepted the challenge when it came, or it has not yet come. The challenge comes to all who hold this belief. This challenge is an opportunity of realizing the truth about, and the law governing, material supply. If it is accepted, then we pass on to higher achievement. If it is not accepted, then there can be no further spiritual progress, along this line at any rate. Life provides the opportunity for our advancement in real *knowing*, but if we do not take up the challenge we may then be classed among life's failures.

I wish all Christian people—that is, all who profess to trust God as their Heavenly Father, as taught by Jesus—might read these words; for, in spite of the fact that George Muller has lived and demonstrated the law of supply, very few still seem to believe it, or at least, they do not *know* it, and cannot demonstrate it. Indeed, most of them think that it is almost wicked to trust God for material supply; and this in spite of the fact that Jesus fed the five thousand, and caused the miraculous draught of fishes entirely through the operation of the same law that caused the American professors to go to George Muller and pay him liberally for his instruction. These same Christian friends say that George Muller is to be admired because he did not pray for his own needs,



but for the needs of God's work. By this they infer that it is wrong to trust God for one's own material supplies. The answer to this is the following quotation from Dr. Pierson's book, page 39, "God was leading His servant in his youth to *cast himself upon Him for temporal supplies.*"

The italics are not mine, but are Dr. Pierson's. This shows what importance this biographer attaches to that event. This experience was the beginning and foundation upon which the whole of George Muller's wonderful life of faith and demonstration was to be built: he was to learn early in life, at the outset of his career, to cast himself upon God for temporal supplies.

Let us listen once again to our friends' criticism. They say that George Muller is to be admired because he prayed not for his own needs but for the needs of God's work. It is probably true that he did pray only for the needs of God's work, and he could do this because he had no need to pray on his own behalf. He *knew*, and through this inward knowledge he was set free. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." This is true in everything. Once we really *know*, the thing is accomplished, the miracle wrought. George Muller would have no need to pray for his own needs, because, by praying for the needs of the Lord's work, he was putting the Kingdom first, after which, naturally, all his own needs would be, and were, supplied, because the less is contained in the greater. He never used any of the Orphanage funds for his own use, neither would he accept any salary, but his own needs were always met. He elected to live very simply and austere, and actually passed on to the Orphanage much of the money which was given to him for his own use. He quaintly termed

such gifts "paying into the bank." All this was possible, because he accepted life's challenge in the first instance, won through, and thus entered into a real *knowing* of the truth that sets us free.

The challenge came to him in this wise. On the one hand his father desired him to become a well-paid clergyman, occupying a comfortable "living." If George Muller accepted this his material needs would always be safely looked after by "the living" and the sure income that went with it, as a permanent thing. Also, how nice it would have been thus to make his father happy by acceding to his wishes. Also, was it not the right and grateful thing for him to do this, in return for all the money that his father had spent upon him? And, also, was it not the right and honourable thing for him to do, after the way he had robbed and cheated his father. Surely, now that he was converted, this was the only right and proper and decent thing he could do.

This was a very severe temptation, it was a very tempting offer, it was a very arresting and powerful challenge. Yet on the other hand was the call to higher service. Not to a comfortable "living," but to a life of self-sacrifice, apparent poverty and much difficulty. George Muller chose the life of higher service, self-sacrifice and difficulty. He had to choose between his father and God, between a safe living and poverty, between a life of ease and a life of hardship, between a life that was made safe by material laws and man-made institutions, and the free life of faith and utter dependence upon God. He then saw that if he chose the harder way of faith he must not only renounce the prospect of a safe "living," but he must also refuse to accept any more money from his father; so that, if his course at the university were to be completed, it must be done



entirely by faith, for he possessed no income, no money, and had no prospects of receiving any, or of earning any. From this it will be seen how severe was life's challenge at this juncture. Everything hung in the balance. If he had done as his father wished him to do, nothing would ever have been heard of George Muller; he would have sunk into obscurity. Yes, he could go forward only by accepting this severe challenge and by trusting his all upon God. The great spiritual work of George Muller depended entirely upon his decision to trust God for material supplies.

Surely one of the weaknesses of institutional religion and organized Christianity is that it is lacking in practical helpfulness in meeting the troubles and difficulties of this life. If a person were ill and were to consult his clergyman or minister in the matter, he would be told to go to a doctor or hospital, just the same as any non-Christian. And yet Jesus healed the sick, and so did the apostles. Again, if a person were in financial difficulties and went to his clergyman or minister about it, what help would he get? Kind-hearted Christians might give him money, or use influence to obtain a situation, but this would provide no real help, for the cause of the trouble would still remain. The cause of poverty and failure in many cases is inward, and until this is removed no amount of exterior help can be of any real assistance. Or, again, whatever may be the cause, the power to overcome a trouble such as poverty or financial difficulty is within, and needs to be developed. Such problems, to the budding man of faith, are but experiences through which he gains strength; and they are capable only of a spiritual solution. The only way whereby permanent prosperity can be attained is through *knowing*. The only way we can

*know* is through experiment and experience. Sometimes we have the experience forced upon us; but we can also make daring experiments. Then we find that if we test life, life also tests us; but, if we are steadfast, we win through, even as George Muller did.

This point is emphasized because it is not generally realized that before we can attain we must pass through our training; that before we can become adepts we must first go through our trials. Many never get beyond the beginning stage, in which they have continually to be thinking and praying about material supply. This has to be left behind, and a state of pure *knowing* reached, which is true liberty and freedom. In this deeper knowing and realization, in this higher consciousness which transcends human limitations, we no longer have to think and pray for daily temporal supplies, but only to *know*.

Now let us note more carefully these remarkable words of Dr. Pierson: "God was leading His servant in his youth to *cast himself upon Him for temporal supplies*." If we are to pass our initiation we must learn to cast ourselves upon God. George Muller, by his decision, cut himself off entirely from all material supply. He gave up his father's allowance which would have been followed by a safe "living" and steady income, thus casting himself adrift upon life, penniless, obscure, helpless—except for God. George Muller having burned his boats behind him had started on the great adventure of life, refusing all human aid, and therefore was entirely dependent upon God. He had no need to keep on praying for God to help him, or to make "treatments" for supply, for he had cast himself entirely upon God; his motive was pure, and his faith was in God. Now when our motive is right, and when



our heart is pure, our eye single, and our faith placed in God—that is, when we cast ourselves utterly and completely upon the inner, sustaining Providential Power of the Universe—then God cannot fail us, something must happen. As most of our readers know, our teaching is not to show people how to make continual demonstrations, but rather how to reach that consciousness, that attitude of faith, that condition of pure knowing, which places our temporal affairs upon a spiritual basis, so that there is never again any question or doubt concerning temporal supplies. This story of George Muller's early experience shows us the way. Be it noted, however, that the motive must be right and the heart pure. Our one great aim must be to do God's will, even though it may mean the loss of friends, or of income, or of the love of relatives, and all that in a worldly sense we hold dear. The way that George Muller followed is entirely different from the modern teaching of visualizing what you require and then willing it into manifestation. This latter is Black Magic or Sorcery; and we have only to read the Book of Revelations in order to see what is the fate of all who practise the Black Art.

## PART I.—CHAPTER III.

## HE RENOUNCES HIS STIPEND.

*"Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days."*

THIS is the record of a man of faith as regards the supply of means and guidance in all the affairs of life, and not as regards healing. George Muller was not a spiritual healer and never claimed to be such. But he put his trust in God for all guidance and for all supply, both for himself and for the work to which he was called. Therefore we are dealing with the way he met and overcame his difficulties regarding the supply of temporal needs. His theology does not interest me. George Muller is not known, neither does his name pass to posterity, because of his theology or doctrinal views, but because of his faith in God as the supplier of all temporal needs. Doctrine sometimes enters into the matter indirectly, however, in that a change of doctrinal view often leads to financial loss; that is where ministers are concerned. Muller offers a case in point, for while preaching in Sidmouth in his early days, the doctrine of baptism was brought to his notice in so challenging a way, that he felt compelled to make a close study and investigation of the subject. Afterwards being convinced of the truth of the doctrine of believers'



baptism, George Muller straightway had himself baptised. Dr. Pierson says: "It is true that in one way he suffered some pecuniary loss through this step, taken in obedience to conviction, but the Lord did not suffer him ultimately to be the loser, even in this respect, for He bountifully made up to him any such sacrifice, even in things that pertain to this life."

It was about this period of his life that young George Muller accepted his first pastorate. He was of a very independent nature, admirably so. He came to London at the invitation of the London Missionary Society, having been accepted for training as a worker among the Jews. However, he found it impossible to be tied down as a paid worker of that society. So he wrote explaining that he could work for them only without salary, and when and where the Lord might seem to direct him. However, the society were of the opinion that they knew how to direct George Muller, much better than the Lord did, so they replied to the effect that they felt it "inexpedient to employ those who were unwilling to submit to their guidance with respect to missionary operations," etc.

George Muller was then led to accept the pastorate of a certain chapel at Teignmouth. It was a small "cause," for the membership was but eighteen and the stipend fifty-five pounds per annum. Previous to this he had taken over the work temporarily. He now told the people plainly "that should they withhold salary it would not affect his decision, inasmuch as he did not preach as a hireling of man, but as a servant of God, and would willingly commit to Him the provision of his personal needs. At the same time, however, he reminded them that it was alike their duty and privilege to

minister in things carnal to those who served them in things spiritual, and that while he did not desire a gift, he did desire fruit that might abound to their account." There is a great truth contained in these words of George Muller's. He wanted his little flock to give, not because he might receive a gift (for he knew that God could look after him in any event), but in order that they might be blessed in the giving and develop spiritual qualities of character by so doing. Here we get a glimpse of his great faith and sincerity and purity of motive.

Apparently the salary was withheld for a time, possibly owing to the fact that many disliked his preaching. "He determined to remain for a time, however, until he was either openly rejected as God's witness, or had some clear divine leading to another field of labour." The fact that the salary was not given did not matter, because two brethren came forward and undertook the provision of all the young minister's needs.

It was not long after he began to receive the settled stipend, that in 1830, George Muller came to the conclusion that he would prefer not to receive a fixed salary at all, but rather to depend upon the freewill love offerings of his congregation. Thus we see that he was continually making experiments in faith, and these prepared him for the greater adventures in faith which he was to make later in life. According to modern standards a salary of fifty-five pounds per annum was not much to give up. Indeed, some popular or fashionable preachers of to-day would not miss this sum from their income. It meant however, a great deal to George Muller. Fifty-five pounds a year in those days was sufficient to live on. Even in my young days 25s. a week was considered a good wage, while routine clerks received merely



£50 a year, and farm labourers but 10s. per week. But in 1830, moreover, a salary of fifty-five pounds a year was worth much more, and deemed much more, than in my later time. It also represented a considerable sacrifice on the part of the little flock to raise such a sum.

This decision on the part of George Muller was "his final farewell to all earthly possessions." It was a momentous event, for the young pastor had by this time taken to himself a wife. This act of renunciation left them both to look only to the Lord.

Dr. Pierson\* writes of this decision to give up a fixed salary for any service rendered to God's people as follows:—While calmly assigning scriptural grounds for such a position, he on the same grounds, urged *voluntary offerings*, whether of money or other means of support as the proper acknowledgment of service rendered by God's minister, and as a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. . . . He had a box put up in the chapel so that whoever had a desire to do something for his support might put such an offering therein as ability and disposition might direct. This was another act of faith, for it is well known that with collections in open plates people give more, because they are ashamed of giving so little, while others give more largely, to be seen of men, and to be thought highly of, in consequence. George Muller did away with collections and put the box in their place, so that those who could give but little should not give more through shame, while those who could give a larger sum should not do so from any unworthy motive, but out of love and gratitude. Surely this was a great adventure in faith!

\* Dr. Pierson's book, *George Muller of Bristol*, can be obtained from The Bible and Tract Depot, Bristol.

"He further felt," continues Dr. Pierson, whose book I recommend as being the most understanding of all the biographies, "that to be entirely consistent, he should *ask no help from man*, even in bearing necessary costs of travel in the Lord's service, nor even state his needs beforehand in such a way as indirectly to appeal for aid. All of these methods he conceived to be forms of trusting in an arm of flesh, going to man for help, instead of going at once, always and only, to the Lord. And he adds: '*To come to this conclusion before God required more grace than to give up my salary.*'"

This act of George Muller's in giving up his salary, abolishing pew rents, and doing away with collections may not meet with the approval of many of my readers, especially those who are ministers or clergymen in receipt of a salary or living. What is here written is in no way intended to be a criticism of those who receive a fixed salary for ministerial work. All do not see eye to eye on this matter, and each one must be allowed freedom of choice to do that which he thinks is right and advisable in his individual case. My own experience, in my own particular work, is that demanding, as it were, a fixed sum, in a business way, conduces to bondage, while accepting free-will offerings leads to liberty. Not only is there more freedom, but there is more harmony in other directions. Even if it led to less being received (which apparently it does not) it would still be a blessing, because to depend upon freewill offerings increases one's own faith and leads to liberty and freedom of life, such as was undreamed of before; and also the act of giving, freely, without compulsion of any kind, blesses and frees the giver, so that all who join in this act, both givers and receivers, are blessed and enriched in their spiritual



life, their faith is increased, and they are brought into the liberty of the sons of God.

This study, together, of the life and work of George Muller up to this point, viz., when he had attained to the age of 25 years, shows us how wonderfully life was preparing him for his life's work. Step by step the Spirit was leading him, every experience being a preparation for greater experiences yet to come. But young George was a willing student. He did not wait for life to discipline him through experience—always a painful process—but he made daring adventures in faith, thus meeting the Divine purpose half way, so to speak. These daring experiments in faith, instead of making his life more difficult and painful, as they threatened to do, of course, at the time, did but fill his life with harmony.

## PART I.—CHAPTER IV.

### HIS STRENGTH OF FAITH.

*"Exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think."*

SOME have said of George Muller that he lacked the faith for the healing of his own body. This was not the case, for, through prayer, he was healed, in 1829, of a bodily infirmity of long standing, which never returned. He also at times prayed with the sick till they were restored. But it is also true that later in life he suffered from diseases for which he did not pray and for which he preferred to consult physicians and surgeons. George Muller lived to the age of 93, conducting his huge undertakings and continuing his preaching until almost the last moment. Is it not a sufficient testimony to the fact that if we live in an attitude of faith and dependence upon God, then we are not only provided with all temporal needs for our work, but also the necessary health and strength to carry on until our work is finished? George Muller was not called to be a healer, and he was wise in not trying to become one. He was engaged in more important work, for which he was so perfectly fitted. We can be truly successful only in the work to which we have been called. The work is not ours, it is God's, and we are privileged to be worked through by God. No ser-



vant of God can be more than a channel or instrument. God works *through* his servants. They do not work for God, but God through them. God raises up his own instruments, guides them, trains them, and, if found worthy, uses them. All that they need for their own support and the carrying on of this work comes to them just at the right moment, and all necessary health, strength and length of days are given to them. How foolish, then, for anyone to think and proclaim that he has a great work to do for God. God may have a certain work to do through him, that is if he is sufficiently humble, but that is quite a different thing.

Dr. Pierson's biography appeals to me more than others I have read, good though they are, because he sees inwardly into George Muller's life, and traces at all times the directing and guiding hand of God. The popular conception of George Muller is probably that he was a sort of superman who did a great work for God and humanity. Dr. Pierson, on the contrary, shows him to be no superman, but a man like ourselves, liable to sin, to doubt, to be discouraged, and even to complain. He also shows that George Muller did not do a great work for God really, but that God chose him as a vessel, or instrument, through which He accomplished His Divine plan. He shows how God prepared His servant for the work which lay ahead, and also how faithfully and readily George Muller responded and reacted to every call and experience.

*The Narrative of the Lord's Dealings with George Muller*,\* in the form of five volumes, tells in detail the story of his life's experience in waiting upon God in faith, and then waiting for the action of God to

\* Published by Nisbet & Co., London: Price 15/-.

take place. God always provided, but sometimes it was delayed to the very instant of necessity, testing George Muller's faith to the uttermost. But God never failed, so that Muller came to the same conclusion as all who have tested God, and have in turn been tested, that He never fails or lets us down. As *The Narrative* covers about three thousand printed pages and consists of nearly a million words, Dr. Pierson could give it only a rapid glance.

Dr. Pierson, when looking at the narrative as a whole, points out seven conspicuous experiences.

1. "*An experience of frequent and at times prolonged financial straits.*"

Often funds were reduced to a single pound or even penny, and sometimes to nothing. This is only natural, for one who decides to live his life entirely by faith must be prepared to live one day at a time and even hour to hour. I think that it is only in this way that faith can be developed. It seems to me that it would not be easy to develop faith in God for supply while possessing a large balance at the bank. Learning to be men of faith is like being trained as an athlete. We have to be tested, and our training made more severe, so that our strength and powers of endurance are increased progressively. Every time of testing, however, prepares us for greater adventures in faith, and also prepares us for that time when we enter into a larger knowledge in which we know that no asking is necessary, for all things are ours (to use), and all that we can do is to praise God for it. All things are ours because all things come from the Lord and are the Lord's. To think that anything is our own personal property is to remain in bondage. We can only be stewards



or users of the things which belong to God and to all. Perfect liberty comes when we realize that all things necessary are provided for our use at the right time, but that they all are the Lord's, and are for the use of the whole. Although, in an outward sense, we may have to own a certain amount of "things," yet in an inward sense we realize that all things are the Lord's. Infinite provision is in the Father's bounty. To know this is perfect liberty.

In order to prevent my readers from assuming that George Muller's needs and the needs of the Lord's work, done through him, were meagrely supplied, let it be said that during his life-time, without ever one penny being asked for, without ever one single appeal being made for support, no less than one million three hundred and eighty thousand pounds sterling, or over six million dollars, was voluntarily given to him. Every need was abundantly met, and neither George Muller nor the work was ever allowed to get into debt. Even his book or journal, *The Lord's Dealings with George Muller*, was paid for before it was issued; he would not have it printed before the whole amount had been given to him. George Muller considered it to be a sin to contract a debt, and both he and his wife were prepared to starve if necessary, rather than owe a penny.

It must also be remembered that George Muller encouraged tests and times of stress and difficulty through his progressiveness. He kept on increasing the size of his orphanages with a consequent increase in outlay and expenditure of upkeep year after year. His object was not merely to run orphanages and to supply the Mission Field with men and money, but rather to teach people by his example how to live a life of faith, and how to enter into liberty over the matter of temporal supply. In order to accomplish

this he made the most extraordinary adventures in faith—launchings out into the deep, such as take our breath away. No wonder he had times of stringency! The wonder is that in spite of these rapid expansions, no real want or lack was ever experienced.

2. *"An experience of the unchanging faithfulness of the Father-God."*

Mr. Muller said to Dr. Pierson: "Not once, or five times, or five hundred times, but thousands of times in these three-score years, have we had in hand not enough for one meal, either in food or in funds; but not once has God failed us; not once have we or the orphans gone hungry or lacked any good thing." Divine bounty and provision never fail if we only hang on long enough. If we cast ourselves upon God, entirely and completely, then God *has* to deliver us, because He can never fail any one who trusts Him entirely. If, however, our faith fails us, if our trust "wobbles," then we are not delivered. So long as we trust our "self," or if we fall back upon "self," because we dare not trust God any farther, then God cannot deliver us. If, however, like George Muller, we refuse to give way, then God *has* to act, even at the last moment.

3. *"An experience of the working of God upon the minds, hearts, and consciences of contributors to the work."*

Dr. Pierson says: "Literally from the ends of the earth, men, women, and children who had never seen Mr. Muller, and could have known nothing of the pressure at the time, have been led at the exact



crisis of affairs to send aid in the very sum or form most needful. In countless cases, while he was still on his knees, the answer has come in such close correspondence with the need as to shut out chance as an explanation, and compel belief in a prayer-healing God." Or it might be described as putting one's trust in an unvarying Divine principle or law, which cannot fail to act when conditions are fulfilled.

All who have conducted work on the free-will offering plan can endorse Dr. Pierson's words. It has been my own experience that just when the need arises the necessary supply always comes. The need may be in August, so that a supporter in Australia must send his love-offering in June for it to arrive at the right time, thus ruling out telepathy, which is the latest explanation of prayer, according to a certain intellectual parson who shall be nameless. Supply does not come through prayer, that is by asking for it, except in so far that such prayer maintains the faith of the one who prays. It comes as a result of an attitude of faith, a condition of mind and heart, in which the Invisible is depended upon solely for all things necessary, instead of upon the visible and earthly. Prayer in the form of begging and beseeching God kindly to answer our requests, and also "treatments," as they are called, are not capable of producing supply in themselves. They help only to the extent that they establish the mind in a condition of faith and entire dependence upon the Invisible Resources, which are inexhaustible. It is through this attitude of faith and dependence upon the Real and Inexhaustible that the right amount of supply is brought to us just at the right time, even though it has to be sent off by someone, months before it is needed. George Muller, while on his knees praying for the needs of his orphans to be met,

often had the exact amount needed (and sometimes more) brought to him by the postman, and he declared that to be an answer to his prayer, although perhaps the amount had been despatched months ago from some distant land. Scoffers laugh and sneer, saying what a simpleton the man must be to think that such a thing is an answer to prayer! How can it be, for the gift was posted to him months before he started to pray for it. The answer is that the supply comes automatically in response to our attitude of faith and trust in the invisible and inexhaustible supplies of the Infinite, and not merely as a result of a petition on a certain date. Prayer, however, is both necessary and helpful, as we must constantly seek God's face if ever we are to maintain and live in the attitude of faith upon which everything depends.

It is impossible to live a life of faith without prayer—continual prayer. It is only through persistence and perseverance in prayer that our faith can be maintained. It is only by seeking God with our whole heart, and by leaning on Him, no matter what happens outwardly, and in spite of appearances, that we can maintain that attitude of mind that produces the faith that can move mountains of difficulty. The life of faith is a life of continual prayer and waiting upon God, seeking in the Invisible the satisfaction of all our needs. We must first achieve in the unseen before we can venture victoriously in the practical affairs of life.

4. *"An experience of habitual hanging upon the unseen God, and upon nothing else."*

The reports that George Muller issued, each year, were reports only, and in no single case did he make



any appeal for funds, or ask for a single penny. These reports were simply an account of his stewardship, telling people what had been done during the year, how the work was progressing and acknowledging the many donations, etc. At one time during a time of stringency, Mr. Muller *withheld the report for a time*, so that people should not know of his need, and thus, *through* knowing of the need, be influenced to subscribe.

This is one of the great secrets of living a life of faith, a life dependent upon God. There has to be a complete dependence upon the Invisible and upon the Invisible *alone*. Sometimes people in financial difficulties write to me asking me to make *an appeal* on their behalf. It would be difficult to refuse these requests if I did not know that it would be doing them the greatest possible harm to accede to their request. *Deliverance can never come, nor can victory be achieved*, if we adopt the attitude of mind that allows us even to think of appealing to the public for help. The very basis of the life of faith and victory is to look to no man, but only to God. If such an appeal were made, and if it were successful, the one upon whose behalf the appeal was made would soon be in as bad a state of want, debt, and difficulty as ever. This would be because giving way to the temptation of seeking help from man, and appealing to man, would create such an attitude of mind as to cut him off entirely from all Divine resources, thus leaving him at the mercy of the world and adverse influences—at the mercy of a world in which every man is for himself, and “the devil take the hindmost,” in which state of grab and robbery the child of God (who is yet apart from God, through not living a life of faith) is a helpless victim.

All our regular readers know that no appeals are ever made on behalf of our own work, and that I would rather give the work up than start that method. If this work is God's work (and it is of no use whatever if it is not, and therefore, not worth carrying on), then God is quite capable of looking after it. But readers may have wondered why, while rigidly abstaining from making any appeal on behalf of the Science of Thought work, I sometimes issue appeals on behalf of other bodies, such as slum missions, etc. It may be rather inconsistent on my part, I admit, but the friends who conduct these worthy missions have perhaps not yet risen to the faith that animated George Muller; they may still think that they ought to appeal to the public, but because their “cause” is good and lovely, I make an exception in their case. If, however, they were to work through the various stages of initiation into the life of faith, even as George Muller did, and as all must do who aspire to live a life of faith and entire dependence upon God, then they would enter into liberty, and never more have to ask me to appeal on their behalf.

It is not for us to criticize such workers who appeal to the public for alms and support. Far from it; instead, we are all filled with admiration for their Christlike lives and self-sacrificing devotion, and love them, and bless them and pray for them, and desire for them all that is good. But a study of George Muller's life convinces me that they would enter into more liberty and freedom, and a glorious state of rest, peace, and certainty, if they were to conduct their work on his lines. It is true they would have their times of testing, even as he had, and would have to win their way, step by step, but they would come through victoriously, even as he did.

There is an unvarying law of Divine Supply of

temporal necessities which, if obeyed, and complied with, never fails to act. All that we need for our body and for our work is all ready waiting for our use—merely waiting for us to fulfil the conditions. The law always acts, it cannot fail.

## PART I.—CHAPTER V.

## CAREFUL STEWARDSHIP.

*“For the which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee.”*

THE purpose of this little book is not to glorify George Muller. That, indeed, would be the last thing that he would desire. It is rather to point out the rules of the game, that is, those divine laws and principles which govern life both in temporal and spiritual things. Glorifying the personality instead of emphasizing the Truth, leads to much error. For one thing it draws away from Truth, and, for another thing, it gives rise to the idea that the hero is a sort of superman or god, beyond ordinary mortals such as we. Because of this it is thought that what he did and achieved is not possible to us plain, everyday folk. While it may be true that we are not called to a great work such as the Lord did through George Muller, yet we are called to exhibit and exercise the same faith that he exhibited and exercised at all times. We can all become men and women of faith even as he, for God calls us all to this greater and richer, happier and freer life of entire dependence upon the Divine Invisible.

We can all pass through the same training and apprenticeship through which George Muller passed.



and enter into the liberty and certainty into which he entered; and all this can be accomplished while we are still engaged in our daily task. Our work for God is the act of service that comes nearest to hand. Doing our duty is the best way of serving both God and man. There may not seem to be much scope for living a life of faith such as George Muller lived, while sweeping out grates, cooking dinners, or digging the ground, pulling up the everlasting weeds, or adding up columns of figures, or sitting in an office dictating letters.

But faith is required to live any life successfully and triumphantly, and although ordinary people cannot give up their salary or income as Muller did, yet they can exercise faith, and make daring adventures in faith, thus entering into a state of liberty and certainty. All the experiences of George Muller's life, together with its achievements, can be applied to our everyday lives. There are lessons innumerable for us all. To the extent that he overcame his difficulties and problems, so also may we overcome ours. Differences in circumstances have very little to do with the matter. We can all be as successful in living our individual life, beset as it is with its own peculiar difficulties and problems, as George Muller was in his.

Now, having said this, let us pass on to the next "conspicuous experience," as Dr. Pierson calls them.

5. *"An experience of conscientious care in accepting and using gifts."*

These are the words of Dr. Pierson, and he continues: "Here is a pattern for all who act as stewards for God. Whenever there was any ground of mis-

giving as to the propriety or expediency of receiving what was offered, it was declined, however pressing the need, unless or until all such objectionable features no more existed. If the party contributing was known to dishonour lawful debts, so that the money was righteously due to others; if the gift was encumbered and embarrassed by restrictions that hindered its free use for God; if it was designated for endowment purposes or as a provision for Mr. Muller's old age, or for the future of the institutions; or if there was any evidence or suspicion that the donation was given grudgingly, reluctantly, or for self-glory, it was promptly declined and returned. In some cases, even where large amounts were involved, parties were urged to wait until more prayer and deliberation made clear that they were acting under divine leading."

It is a pity that this gifted biographer had to dismiss such an important subject in so few brief words. In this short sentence there are so many grave decisions, involving tremendous adventures in faith as to take away one's breath. Here we see revealed what living a life of faith meant to George Muller. We can all follow him, perhaps, in his refusal of money coming from doubtful sources. We can perhaps follow him even in his refusal of gifts "encumbered and embarrassed by restrictions that hindered its free use for God." But when we come to Mr. Muller's refusal of large sums of money kindly and lovingly given for endowment purposes, or as a provision for his old age, and for the future of the institutions, we all of us must be filled with amazement. Then, again, the returning of large sums of money with the suggestion that the donors should "wait until more prayer and deliberation made clear that they were acting under divine leading," must



also fill us all with wonder and admiration. The fact that George Muller could act in these ways when the money was so much needed, and for so good a purpose, impresses me more than the spectacular aspect of his work. That one million three hundred and eighty thousand pounds sterling (nearly seven million dollars) were given to George Muller during his ministry; that he built orphanages, at a cost of £115,000, and maintained them, feeding, clothing, and educating thousands of orphans; and that, in addition to all this, he started and kept going a Missionary Society which sent, equipped and maintained a large force of missionaries in foreign lands; all this does not impress me half as much as George Muller's refusal of money sent for his old age and for the endowment and future support of his work. The great things are always accomplished out of sight. First within and then without—this is always the law. The real work of George Muller's life was done in secret, on his knees, and at his desk. Here it was that great battles were fought and won, great decisions made, together with heroic ventures in faith.

To one who asked him the secret of his service he said: "There was a day when I died, *utterly died*"; and as he spoke, he bent lower and lower until he almost touched the floor—"I died to George Muller, his opinions, preferences, tastes and will—died to the world, its approval or censure—died to the approval or blame even of my brethren and friends—and since then I have studied only to show myself approved unto God."

In order to understand properly why Mr. Muller refused all donations towards the support of his old age, all endowments, and all provision for the future of his work, we must consider the motive that in-

spired him in undertaking the work of starting and maintaining the Orphanages.

To start an Orphanage, merely, was not his object. He had a greater goal in view—he was inspired by a deeper motive. I cannot do better than reproduce Mr. Muller's actual words in which he states his motives and objects. They are as follows: "Through my pastoral labours among the saints in Bristol, through my considerable correspondence, and through brethren who visited Bristol, I had constantly cases brought before me which proved that one of the especial things which the children of God needed in our day was *to have their faith strengthened*. For instance, I might visit a brother who worked fourteen or even sixteen hours a day at his trade, the necessary result of which was that not only his body suffered, but his soul was lean, and he had no enjoyment in the things of God. Under such circumstances I might point out to him that he ought to work less, in order that his bodily health might not suffer, and that he might gather strength for his inner man by reading the word of God, by meditation over it, and by prayer. The reply, however, I generally found to be something like this, 'But if I work less I don't earn enough for the support of my family. Even now, whilst I work so much I have scarcely enough. The wages are so low that I must work hard in order to obtain what I need.' There was no trust in God. No real belief in the truth of that word, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.'

"I might reply something like this, 'My dear brother, it is not your work which supports your family, but the Lord; and He who has fed you and your family when you could not work at all on



account of illness would surely provide for you and yours, if for the sake of obtaining food for your inner man, you were to work only for so many hours a day as would allow you proper time for retirement. And is it not the case now that you begin the work of the day after having had only a few hurried moments for prayer; and when you leave off your work in the evening, and mean then to read a little of the word of God, are you not too much worn out in body and mind to enjoy it, and do you not often fall asleep whilst reading the Scriptures, or whilst on your knees in prayer? The brother would allow it was so; he would allow that my advice was good; but still I read in his countenance, even if he should not actually have said so, 'How should I get on if I were to *carry out* your advice?'

"I longed, therefore, to have something to point the brother to as a visible proof that our God and Father is the same faithful God as ever He was; as willing as ever to prove Himself to be the LIVING GOD in our day, as formerly, to *all who put their trust in Him*. Again, sometimes I found children of God tried in mind by the prospect of old age, when they might be unable to work any longer, and, therefore, were harassed by the fear of having to go into the poor-house. If in such a case I pointed out to them how their Heavenly Father has always helped those who put their trust in Him, they might not perhaps always say that times have changed; but yet it was evident enough that God was not looked upon by them as the LIVING GOD. My spirit was oft-times bowed down by this, and I longed to set something before the children of God whereby they might see that He does not forsake, even in our day, those who rely upon Him.

"Another class of persons were brethren in busi-

ness, who suffered in their souls and brought guilt on their consciences by carrying on their business almost in the same way as unconverted persons do. The competition in trade, the bad times, the over-peopled country, were given as reasons why, if the business were carried on simply according to the word of God, it could not be expected to do well. Such a brother, perhaps, would express the wish that he might be differently situated; but very rarely did I see *that there was a stand made for God, that there was the holy determination to trust in the living God, and to depend on Him in order that a good conscience might be maintained*. To this class likewise I desired to show, by a visible proof, that God is unchangeably the same.

"Then there was another class of persons, individuals who were in professions in which they could not continue with a good conscience, or persons who were in an unscriptural position with reference to spiritual things; but both classes feared on account of the consequences to give up the profession in which they could not abide with God, or to leave their position, lest they should be thrown out of employment. My spirit longed to be instrumental in strengthening their faith by giving them not only instances from the word of God of His willingness and ability to help all those who rely upon Him, but *to show them by proofs* that He is the same in our day. I knew well that the word of God ought to be enough, and it was, by grace, enough to me; but still I considered that I ought to lend a helping hand to my brethren, if by any means by this visible proof of the unchangeable faithfulness of the Lord, I might strengthen their hands in God; for I remembered what a great blessing my own soul had received through the Lord's dealings with His ser-



vant, A. H. Franke, who, in dependence upon the Living God alone, established an immense Orphan House. (In Germany.)

"I, therefore, judged myself bound to be the servant of the Church of Christ in the particular point on which I had obtained mercy; namely, *in being able to take God by His word and to rely upon it.* All these exercises of my soul, which resulted from the fact that so many believers with whom I became acquainted were harassed and distressed in mind, or brought guilt on their consciences, on account of not trusting in the Lord, were used by God to awaken in my heart the desire of setting before the Church at large, and before the world, a proof that He has not in the least changed; and this seemed to me best done by the establishing and carrying on of an Orphan House. It needed to be something which could be seen even by the natural eye. Now, if I, a poor man, simply by prayer and faith, obtained, *without asking any individual,* the means for establishing and carrying on an Orphan House, there would be something which, with the Lord's blessing, might be instrumental in strengthening the faith of the children of God, besides being a testimony to the consciences of the unconverted of the reality of the things of God. This, then, was the primary reason for establishing the Orphan Houses.

"I certainly did from my heart desire to be used by God to benefit the bodies of poor children bereaved of both parents, and seek, in other respects, with the help of God, to do them good for this life. I also particularly longed to be used by God in getting the dear Orphans trained up in the fear of God; but still the first and primary object of the institution was, and still is, that God might be magnified by the fact that the Orphans under my care were,

and are, provided with all they need only *by prayer and faith,* without any one being asked by me or my fellow-labourers, whereby it might be seen that God is FAITHFUL STILL and HEARS PRAYERS STILL. That I was not mistaken has been abundantly proved, both by the conversion of many sinners, who have read the accounts which have been published in connection with this work, and also by the abundance of fruit that has followed in the hearts of the saints, for which from my inmost soul I desire to be grateful to God, and the honour and glory of which not only is due to Him alone, but which I, by His help, am enabled to ascribe to Him."

These words of George Muller's explain very clearly why he refused all donations sent to him to provide for his old age, and also all moneys sent as endowments, or for the future of the Orphanages. His aim was to provide an object-lesson in faith—day by day faith, a life of utter dependence upon God. Because of this it was out of the question to accept either endowments or provision for the needs of his old age. If he had accepted these kind gifts it would have been a contradiction of the real aim and purpose of the work. The Orphanages would no longer have been an object-lesson in faith, but rather of prudence and worldly wisdom. Apart from all this George Muller knew better than we do that if he had accepted sums of money as provision against the needs of his old age, and for the future demands of the Orphanages, his own spiritual life would have suffered an eclipse. No longer would he have been able to keep his faith and spiritual vision clear, day by day, like a glass or china vessel that is continually being washed in a stream of crystal water. Instead they would have become clouded and dim. It is only through the daily exer-



cise of faith—through meeting with experiences which compel us to cast ourselves completely upon God, acknowledging that He alone can deliver us and supply our needs, and that if we are to be delivered then God must do it, and do it in His own way and at His own time—it is in this way alone that our spiritual vision can be kept clear and our faith retained fresh and ever new.

In order to maintain his faith and develop it, George Muller, like many more of us, constantly endeavoured to make his life more difficult so that he had to trust God, because there was no other way out. When the die is cast, when we have ventured all, when we have burnt our boats behind us, it is then that we can trust God, really and truly without any reservation or holding back.

George Muller was determined not only to put the work of the Orphanages and his other activities on a purely spiritual basis, but also his own life. Each day must be a day of adventure and of casting all care upon God, relying upon the Invisible for supply instead of the arm of flesh; upon Divine Wisdom, instead of upon expediency, prudence, and the wisdom of man. He knew the curse of too much money, and the blessedness of being hard up, but yet at the same time to know that all needs will be supplied at the right time, without fail. He knew that he had the inexhaustible resources of the Infinite upon which to draw, and that these could never fail.

## PART I.—CHAPTER VI.

### “LOOKING UNTO GOD.”

*“Pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.”*

WE now pass on to the sixth “conspicuous experience,” which is: “An experience of extreme caution lest there should be even a careless *betrayal of the fact of pressing need*, to the outside public.” These again are the exact words of Dr. Pierson, to whom I am much indebted for much of the material used in these articles. He continues: “The helpers of the institutions were allowed to come into such close fellowship and to have such knowledge of the exact state of the work as aids not only in common labours, but in common prayers and self-denials. Without such acquaintance they could not serve, pray, nor sacrifice intelligently. But these associates were most solemnly and repeatedly charged never to reveal to those without, not even in the most serious crises, any want whatsoever of the work. The one and only resort was ever to be the God who hears the cry of the needy; and the greater the exigency, the greater the caution lest there should even seem to be a looking away from divine to human help.”

This is another rule not easy to carry out. I say "rule" advisedly, because there are definite rules governing the life of faith, which if obeyed always bring all that is needed, but which, if not carried out, lead to difficulty, stringency and bondage. When depending upon God for supply we must not merely refrain from making appeals to the Public on behalf of our work, but we must also not let anyone know if funds are at zero. In other words we have to act at all times as though the necessary supply is already visible. If we do this then it is obvious that we cannot let people know of our apparent lack, for that would break contact with God. It would be an act of weakness. It would cancel our dependence upon God, and transfer it to man.

George Muller realized the importance of this and most rigidly enforced the rule. It is not an easy rule always to follow, but those who follow it, although they may apparently suffer loss at the time, do not lose in the long run; but, instead, enter into liberty regarding temporal supply, which is a thing far more precious than any material thing.

I do not say that money may not be raised by other means. It can be so raised, yet to do so is other than faith. And it leads to bondage and many evils, such as the materialization of the otherwise splendid work. There is a tendency for the Spirit to withdraw from such work, leaving only a dead shell of human organization and activity. Again, sufficient money can be obtained only by expensive advertising, by paid collectors, and so on, the cost of which eats up much of the money that is collected; so that of the money subscribed very little ever reaches the work proper. It has been stated, with what measure of truth I do not know, that out

of every pound subscribed to some organized charities only two shillings and sixpence ever reaches the work itself, the other seventeen shillings and sixpence being expended in advertising and collecting.

How different is the condition of affairs when free-will offerings are depended upon. There is perfect liberty, no debt incurred, no worry, no anxiety, but just what is required to meet the needs of the work comes to hand exactly at the right moment. There are no expenses of advertising, nor of collectors, so that the whole of the money subscribed goes direct to the work. Because no debt is incurred there is no interest to pay, neither is there any of the anxiety that debt brings with it.

Let us notice the sharp contrast that exists between the methods of faith and those of the world. George Muller never allowed any outsider to know that the work was ever short of funds. The method of the world and of human wisdom is to make an appeal, to pitch a piteous tale, to hint at the work having to close for lack of support, to disclose a sad tale of debt and interest payable, and to beseech people to help. Such a negative recital of woe is very bad psychology. It sets the imagination of the management and of all the officials and staff, also of the public, running in the wrong direction. George Muller's method on the contrary is good psychology, for it sets the imagination of all concerned working in the right direction.

There were times when George Muller was tempted in this matter. When funds were exhausted and, apparently, there was no prospect of immediate relief, someone might write or call asking if the work was in need of help. He knew that if he stated the true facts of the case a handsome donation would result. But George Muller never did do so, and in



this he was very wise, as all who have depended upon free-will offerings very well know. To have given way would have undermined his own faith and that of his workers. It would also have directed their attention away from God to man; and this would have been disastrous.

In my very small way I have experienced the same thing. People have written, most kindly, saying: "If your funds ever need help just let me know, and I will send a donation." When replying to thank the writers for their kindness I have always said that they never would hear from me, because the work always has received, and always will receive, the support that it needs, without anyone being asked for a penny. It is the Lord's work, and He is quite capable of supporting it. The way I look at things is this. If a certain thing seems necessary, then if the money comes along before it is necessary to order it, it is the Lord's will that we should have it. If the money does not come along, then the thing is not needed, and thus I have been prevented from making a mistake, or false move. There is no difficulty on God's side. He can provide all the funds necessary, and always does provide them, through moving the hearts of His people to give; and if the work is necessary then all its needs are provided for without asking anyone, or making any appeal. If the Lord wants the work to go on He will provide for it. If He does not, then He will not; and if the work is not the Lord's then the sooner we stop it the better it will be for all concerned.

Now although it is an absolute necessity that no one should be asked for funds, and that no one should be allowed to know that the work is short of money (temporarily, always temporarily, be it remembered), yet it is admissible to let it be known

that the work is supported by voluntary gifts. George Muller, when he gave up his salary as a minister, put up a box in his church, into which those of his congregation who felt so disposed could put their love offerings. He also announced that it was their privilege to help the Lord's work by giving freely to it. Thus it was made known that the work was supported by voluntary gifts. But no one was ever asked to give, while every opportunity to evade giving was given, to those who did not want to help. That is to say, George Muller did not want any money that was given reluctantly—given, perhaps, because people are looking when a collection plate is pushed in front of one. He desired only the money that was given with a full and grateful heart. He did so because he knew that the Lord desired only such gifts, and that all unwilling contributions could never bless either the work or the giver.

To act as he did was a great adventure in faith. It meant giving up his only material source of temporal supply, viz., his salary as a paid minister; it meant, humanly speaking, casting away the substance, a sure thing, and depending instead upon an intangible and untried principle or law, or upon people's generosity. The question was, Would they give, when not compelled or cajoled into giving? Would not some of them be glad of the opportunity to avoid parting with their hard-earned money?

George Muller, however, did not depend upon people, nor upon their generosity, but put his trust in a living God. He trusted in a divine law or principle, and because of this he was to succeed right from the commencement. He knew the rules or laws governing the life of faith, for he had already tested them and proved them to be true. But in spite of this his was a great venture in faith, be-

cause things always appear to be different from what they truly are. When gifts are already on the way the man of faith is faced with seeming lack. But, conversely, when his purse is empty, and his cupboard bare, there is plentiful supply near at hand. The man of faith who puts his trust in a living God, when he prays can thank God for the thing which he knows is his, although outwardly it has not yet appeared, and to human sense never will appear. He is therefore not surprised when something beyond his expectations almost miraculously comes about. How different is this from prayer as ordinarily practised. If what was prayed for fell down on to the head of the one praying, no one would be more surprised than the supplicant.

When George Muller gave up his salary it was about fifty pounds per annum. So much was he prospered, that later, although he did not seek it, his income from love-offerings rose to £2,600 a year (equal almost to £5,000 a year to-day), most of which he gave away to the work of the Lord.

I must not close this chapter without pointing out that in addition to venturing our all upon God, and in addition, also, to keeping from outsiders any hint, even, of temporary, apparent lack or stringency, there must also be a continual waiting upon God, a constant turning to the Unseen. The amount of supply manifesting in the outward is in direct proportion to the amount of real prayer in which we persistently and perseveringly engage. We do not have to pray in order to convince God. God does not have to be convinced, but we ourselves have to be convinced and brought into a state of awareness and realization. It is not necessary that God should be changed, but that we should be brought into

Truth, and maintained in Truth. This can be achieved only through waiting upon God, through entering the Super-conscious in which we see and know things as they really are, and not as they, to us, falsely appear.



PART I.—CHAPTER VII.

FAITH VICTORIOUS.

*"Thy Word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path."*

BEFORE passing further in our study of the life of George Muller, let me reproduce parts of two interesting letters which have come to me. The first one runs as follows: "I have been especially interested in your articles on George Muller, as my father was brought up in his Schools. It may be of interest to you to know that during my father's time there, funds became so exhausted that there was no breakfast for the children, one morning. So Dr. Muller held a prayer meeting, for he never went into debt. By that morning's post came notice of a large consignment of Scotch oatmeal, a gift, and a cheque for £800—both, of course, unsought. My father, who is a great age, is a living testimony to the wonderful influence of Dr. Muller, for he is truly a Christ-like character."

This letter is very interesting, in that it confirms what has been said that though George Muller's faith was tried and tested almost to breaking point, and supplies were withheld until all seemed lost, yet God never let him down. At the very last moment

FAITH VICTORIOUS.

abundant or sufficient supplies always appeared. It is helpful to receive this confirmation, and I thank our correspondent for sending this testimony.

The next letter confirms a story that I have not come across in any of the books on the life of George Muller. It may be in one of them, however, but if so, I have not yet found it. The story is so persistent that one feels surprised that it is not referred to in print.

This story, as I have heard it, is similar in some respects to the one just related. In this case, however, it was dinner which was not forthcoming. George Muller, however, acted as though abundance was already manifest. He made the children sit down at the dinner table, although there was no food to put on it. Still no food appeared, so he told the children to sing Grace, and while this was being done, up drove two baker's carts full right up with bread, but who sent it no one knew. The great point about this is that Dr. Muller acted as though abundance was already manifest. He exhibited faith. He not only believed that God would supply all his needs, but he acted as though such supply was already visible. He made arrangements for it. Many of us, alas! say that we have faith, and that we believe that our supply will manifest, yet at the same time make arrangements in case it does not appear. We make sure that we have a "bolt-hole," to which we can run. We say we are going to be victorious, yet we make preparations for defeat. The life of faith cannot be lived in this way. Courage is required. We must be willing to burn our boats behind us, and to trust ourselves entirely to the Invisible Power. The letter which follows confirms the story in an interesting way. Naturally, it differs in minor details, as oft-told tales always do.

"Have read with special interest your papers upon George Muller, because I was born in Bristol, on the Durdham Downs, a short distance from the Orphanages, and grew up in knowledge of what faith meant to him. I wonder whether it would interest you to hear a little story in this regard?"

"When I was a child, a tale went the rounds—got into the Bristol 'Times and Mirror' too—that one morning, just lately, George Muller had found himself with some hundreds of orphans on his hands and not one morsel to give them for breakfast, nor money to buy any. He told God about this, and, while still on his knees, two baker's carts full of bread arrived—an anonymous gift.

"I must confess we children were sceptical—it just didn't seem probable.

"Two and a half years ago I was in Rio, had given up my house and was awaiting the boat at the farm of friends. Mr. — is of an old West of England milling family, and out there he manages the milling part of The —. He is about my own age (getting near 60), and, talking about the old folk in —, he asked me if I'd ever heard of George Muller. "When I was a boy," he went on to say, "I used to stay a lot with my uncle—a bit wild, very fond of his wife however—a very good woman, my Aunt. He'd been out early at the bakehouses and came back up into their bedroom (I after him, as usual), and found my Aunt on her knees by the bed. He stood waiting by the window till she got up and came to him, and he put his arm round her waist and said, 'Milly, I don't think God's very pleased with me lately. What'll I do?' And she answered like a shot, 'send some bread to George Muller. He wants it.' 'So I will, lass,' said he, and went right down, had two carts loaded up, and sent them straight off.

Lord! I've often wondered what the old boy thought when he saw them!"

"This is as nearly as possible in the words it was told me. Mr. — had heard nothing of the other side—was not even interested when I tried to tell him—just went on chuckling at his own recollections.

"If this interests you and you ever speak of it to anyone—it would perhaps be as well to suppress names—though I don't suppose Mr. — would mind."

Now let us return to a study of George Muller and the secret of his success and achievement.

Be it noted that I am not attempting to write a biography, nor even a brief outline of the life of this remarkable character. Those who desire to read the life of George Muller should procure one of the several excellent books on the subject. What we wish is just to unfold certain lessons from his life, to discover the secret of his achievement and the foundation of his faith.

George Muller found three texts which are the secret of true prosperity. The first is Joshua i, 8: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." And the second is found in the first Psalm. Here it is: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall



not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." And the third is found in James i, 25: "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

Dr. Pierson remarks: "Here, then, we have a threefold witness to the secret of true prosperity and unmingled blessing." Yet these would have been useless if George Muller had been content only with reading them in the Bible. The secret of his prosperity and success was that he claimed these texts as his own, believed them to be absolute truth, and lived in them. It is one thing to know these things, and quite another thing to practise them. Knowledge itself is of little or no value if it does not lead to action. A man may know how to paint a picture, but if he does not paint his picture, of what use is his knowledge? A man may know how and why exercise is good for his health, and he may be skilled in all kinds of health-giving physiological movements, but if he never makes use of them, or takes any exercise, his knowledge is useless to him.

It is the same with regard to knowledge concerning faith, the laws governing the life of faith, and the inner aspects of supply, through making invisible contacts with the One Source of all things; if knowledge is not translated into action, then we might just as well be without it.

People are apt to look upon George Muller as a super-man, one who was born superior to ordinary folk; just like a giant or strong man is born superior, physically, to his fellows. But he was no super-man. He was weak and erring like all the rest of us. He became strong in faith, and able to accomplish wonderful things through meditating upon the Word, and spending much of his time in prayer. While other people were either wasting their time, or were im-

mersed in care and outward activities, George Muller was engaged in prayer and study of the Word. While others were wasting their energies in idleness or too much work, he was reaching out into the Invisible. He was working first in the Unseen, after which wonderful things came to pass in the Seen.

All that we have learnt from George Muller's life does but confirm what we have been teaching for years. First in the Unseen, then in the Seen. We cannot get away from this truth. If we desire to see results in the outward life, then something more than outward activity, striving and industry is necessary. We must first work within, in the Invisible, in The Secret Place. If we do this, persistently, perseveringly, continuously and habitually, then the outward results will follow as a matter of course. While outward activities must not be neglected, and while industry and application are necessary, yet the silent work in the Unseen is by far the more important. If we persevere in reaching out into the Invisible, then outward work and labour cease to be anxious toil, and we are able to accomplish far more, with less effort than ever before.

Students not infrequently write to say that they cannot spare the time for study and meditation—that the duties of life are too onerous and exacting, that life is too complicated and too full of activities of all kinds, and also duties, for any such regime to be followed. They are like the man described by George Muller, who worked such long hours, and became so weary that he could spend hardly any time in prayer. Yet in spite of his anxious and unremitting toil he was so poor he could scarcely afford the necessaries of life for his family. He would not believe when George Muller told him that if he worked less and prayed more he would be much better off. "It is

not your work that keeps you," said Muller, "it is the Lord."

This case is precisely the same as that of those who write saying that their life is too full of duties and pressing activities to allow them to spend any time in study and the Silence. If they were to work less, and insist upon time for quiet communion, in other words, *make* time, as it is popularly called, they would find that they would accomplish more with far less effort, and actually have some leisure, a thing they never had before.

Also, it must be pointed out that it is not sufficient only to read or study books about Truth, or to go to meetings. These are all good in their way, but are useless without the application, which is, to spend a definite time in the Unseen and Eternal each day. Through prayer we make contact with Reality, contact with the Invisible Power that upholds and guides everything. It is only in this way that great things can be accomplished.

What we see outwardly is only the shell of things. Behind appearance is the Soul or Reality. It is the Soul that gives life and form. Outwardly, we can deal only with effects. Inwardly, we reach Cause, that is, the Power that creates, forms, and rules all things. This is why elsewhere I have stated that the scientific application of right thought *deals not with effects, but with causes: not with outward form, but with the Inner Power that produces all things.*"

## PART I.—CHAPTER VIII.

### "STEPPING FORWARD."

*"I will show thee my faith by my works."*

THE life of George Muller is naturally full of lessons of helpfulness towards faith in a living and active God. It, naturally, is also full of incidents showing how this man of God was led by the Spirit in all his enterprises. Divine Guidance is as much a part of the life of faith as the supply of all one's needs in answer to prayer. Faith without wisdom and good judgment would be of little use in conducting such a work as George Muller was able to accomplish. What applies to George Muller in his great work also applies with equal force to us in our lesser spheres. We can be truly successful in life only to the extent that we make right decisions. There is only one path that is the right one, and it is in this path alone that we can progress towards our highest good, in a frictionless and harmonious manner.

Most readers will be willing to admit that one who is engaged in a special work for God, must be Divinely led in all that he does; that he can never accomplish the work to which he has been called except he be guided in all that he undertakes. They will be ready to admit that in such a life there must be a Divine plan, so that obviously it is only



to the extent in which that plan is followed that any true achievement becomes possible. But, some, who may admit that such must be the case with men like George Muller, may refuse to believe that such is the case in their own life, or in the lives of other ordinary people. The same laws, however, apply in all cases. There is a Divine plan behind the life of each child of God; therefore, true success, together with harmonious progression, can be achieved only to the extent that the Divine plan is followed.

Some readers, however, who may agree with all that has just been said, may ask, How can they know what the Divine plan is, or how can they become aware of the Divine leading?

Well, the first thing to do is to believe in the Divine plan and the Divine leading. It is common amongst Christian people to attribute all hindrances to their plans to Satanic influence. Thereupon they set about praying that God should defeat the works of the Devil. But those who believe in Divine Omnipotence, and that Infinite Love and Wisdom are at work behind every experience of their life, know very well that all things are arranged by the Lord. If, therefore, something is taken away, it is only that something better may be put in its place: or, if an obstacle is put in our path, it is only to prevent us from going the wrong way, and to guide us into what is for us the only right path. When once we believe in the Sovereignty of God, Satanic influence, in this sense, becomes a thing of the past. Evil can affect us only through our own evil. Evil has power only on its own plane: it has no part in the Divine Providence. God has power to give and to take away; but if anything is taken away it is only to make room for something far better.

If, therefore, placing our life in the care and direc-

tion of God (striving only to do His Will), we yet attribute hindrances to devilish influences, we affirm thereby that God is the Author of the same. If, however, we truly believe in the Sovereignty of God, who is the supreme and only Good, then we know that Divine Wisdom is behind every experience, and that Divine Love is actively at work on our behalf—working to bring about our highest good, and to create in our life the truest success and achievement. By true success I mean that kind of success which would fill us with content and satisfaction when we look back on our life in the light of Eternity.

If, therefore, we find our path blocked, or our plans thwarted, we will know that it is the work of the Lord (Infinite Wisdom and Love), and not the machinations of the Devil. If we are prevented from going a certain way, then it is because that is not the right way for us. We are prevented from travelling the path we have planned, in order that we may choose a better one, in fact the only right path for us, and therefore the only one in which we can be happy, or in which we can make frictionless and harmonious progression.

If we believe that Divine Wisdom and Love are at work behind every experience we are much more likely to act wisely and to make a right decision than if we believe otherwise. If we believe that evil is at work, that is, inimical forces uncontrolled by God, then we are almost sure to act wrongly by forcing the issue instead of waiting for Divine Wisdom to open up a better way. We may believe in Satanic influences if we please (for in that sense Satan is the tester and prover, under God, and therefore can do us no harm, but only help to achieve the Divine purpose), but if we believe that God overrules all things for good, and only permits apparently evil



happenings for our good and the achievement of great ends in view to Him, but unknown to us, then all is well. All is well, because we believe in the Sovereignty of God. Through believing in this we know that all things are being overruled for good and that God's perfect plan is being assuredly worked out.

First, then, we have to believe in the Sovereignty of God, to believe that Divine Wisdom and Love are at work behind all the experiences of life, guiding and leading us on to our highest good.

Secondly, when checked, we must not force things, but must wait, instead, for the Spirit to adjust matters, either by removing the obstacle, or by opening up another and better way.

Thirdly, when the leading does come, we must follow it. It will surely be a test of faith, and it will only be by the grace of God that we can follow it, but at all costs we must go forward, on no account holding back. This is of the utmost importance, and it is because of this that our Lord said: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." He who starts to live the life of faith must burn his boats behind him, trusting himself entirely to the Spirit, otherwise "he cannot be my disciple."

George Muller, because he gained his knowledge from the Bible, from prayer, and from experience, worked along these lines. He prayed continuously and believed in prayer, yet he worked outwardly in a practical way. He believed in the Sovereignty of God and an overruling Divine Providence. When he met with a rebuff he did not force matters, but waited to co-operate with God, instead of possibly working against the Divine Providence through forcing matters in a self-willed manner. He also

went forward courageously, although each forward move incurred greater responsibilities, and involved him in apparently insuperable difficulties.

In 1845 the rented houses in Wilson Street became inadequate for the growing needs of the Orphanage, so after much prayer and self-examination of his own heart, George Muller decided to erect buildings suitable for the purpose. Let us note in passing this searching of heart by George Muller. In so doing he showed his deep knowledge of the laws governing the life of faith, and the secrets of the life lived according to Divine guidance. One way of discovering the true path is to examine our own heart and motive. We can always know that we are choosing the right thing if it is for the greatest good of others, and for our own highest good. If when we examine our own heart we find that our motive is pure and single, that there is no desire whatsoever for fame, no self-glorification, no selfish motive, no desire but to glorify God and serve humanity, then we may be sure that we are travelling in the true direction and choosing the right thing.

George Muller, therefore, after examining his own heart, and finding no other motive than to glorify and serve God with a pure desire unsullied by any motive of self, decided that it was the Lord's will that he should press on.

On the thirty-sixth day after specific prayer had been made concerning the new project one thousand pounds was received. Three days later an Architect voluntarily offered to do all the necessary work, including the superintending of the building of the new Orphanages, entirely without fee.

First of all, land had to be found and bought. It had to be near the city of Bristol, and to comprise



six or seven acres. Such a site was expected to cost not less than two or three thousand pounds.

Dr. Pierson, in his well-known work *George Muller of Bristol*, relates the following: "Specially asking the Lord to go before him, Mr. Muller now began to seek a suitable site. About four weeks passed in seemingly fruitless search, when he was strongly impressed that very soon the Lord would give the ground, and he so told his helpers on the evening of Saturday, January 31, 1846. Within two days, his mind was drawn to *Ashley Down* where he found lots singularly suited for his needs. Shortly after, he called twice on the owner, once at his house and again at his office; but on both occasions, failing to find him, he only left a message. He judged that God's hand was to be seen *even in his not finding the man he sought*, and that, having twice failed the same day, he was not to push the matter as though self-willed, but patiently wait till the morrow. When he did find the owner, his patience was unexpectedly rewarded. He confessed that he had spent two wakeful hours in bed, thinking about his land, and about what reply he should make to Mr. Muller's enquiry as to its sale for an orphan house; and that he had determined, if it were applied for, to ask but one hundred and twenty pounds an acre, instead of two hundred, his previous price.

"The bargain was promptly completed; and thus the Lord's servant, by not being in a hurry, saved, in the purchase of the site of seven acres, five hundred and sixty pounds! Mr. Muller had asked the Lord to go before him, and He had done so in a sense he had not thought of, first speaking about the matter to the owner, holding his eyes waking till He had made clear to him, as His servant and

steward, what He would have him do in the sale of that property."

In Appendix G., Dr. Pierson gives further particulars of this incident, as follows: "Mr. Benjamin Perry gives an account of the circumstances under which the land was purchased, prior to the erection of the orphan houses on *Ashley Down*, as he heard it from Mr. Muller's own mouth, showing how directly the Lord worked on the mind of the owner. Mr. Muller had been making enquiries respecting the purchase of land much nearer Bristol, the prices asked being not less than £1,000 per acre, when he heard that the land upon which the Orphan Houses Nos. 1 and 2 stand was for sale, the price being £200 per acre. He therefore called at the house of the owner, and was informed that he was not at home, but that he could be seen at his place of business in the city. Mr. Muller went there, and was informed that he had left a few minutes before, and that he would find him at home. Most men would have gone off to the owner's house at once; but Mr. Muller stopped and reflected, 'Peradventure the Lord, having allowed me to miss the owner twice in so short a time, has a purpose that I should not see him to-day; and lest I should be going before the Lord in the matter, I will wait till the morning.' And accordingly he waited and went the next morning, when he found the owner at home; and on being ushered into his sitting-room, he said: 'Ah, Mr. Muller, I know what you have come to see me about. You want to buy my land on *Ashley Down*. I had a dream last night, and I saw you come in to purchase the land, for which I have been asking £200 per acre; but the Lord told me not to charge you more than £120 per acre, and therefore if you are willing to buy at that price the matter is settled.'

And within ten minutes the contract was signed. 'Thus,' Mr. Muller pointed out, 'by being careful to follow the Lord, instead of going before His leading, I was permitted to purchase the land for £80 per acre less than I should have paid if I had gone to the owner the evening before.'"

The above is but one of many events which illustrate the way George Muller allowed himself to be guided by the Spirit in momentous decisions. In each case he displayed the greatest wisdom, and the deepest insight into the rules and laws which govern the life of faith and entire dependence upon God, both for supply and guidance.

In closing this chapter it should be pointed out how different such a procedure as the one just described is from the harsh and hard ways of the world. If George Muller had adopted the usual practice of beating the vendor down in price, he might, or might not, have been successful in so doing. If he had been successful he would have been hardened and his faith in God lessened, because he would have learned to put more trust in his ability to drive a hard bargain, than in God. Also the vendor would have felt aggrieved that he had been beaten down below the proper price. Thus both parties to the deal would have been injured and brutalised. Instead of this, through allowing himself to be guided by the Spirit, George Muller purchased the land at a reasonable price, his faith in God was strengthened, and he met the vendor and did business with him in Christian fellowship and love. The vendor, on his part, was greatly blessed, for he was led to give his profit to the Lord, voluntarily: a most blessed thing for him to have done. It will be seen, then, that if we allow ourselves to be guided by the Spirit to act in love, then we are

led into harmony, peace and blessedness. The way of the Spirit always is harmony and peace.

What George Muller did in the conduct of his great work, or, rather, in the carrying out of the great work which God accomplished through him, we, too, may do in our own small way, as far as trusting in God and being guided by the Spirit are concerned. The laws are ever the same. They do not change.



PART I.—CHAPTER IX.

“THE MOTIVE OF SERVICE.”

“*Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s  
business?*”

THERE are two laws known by spiritual teachers everywhere, and in all ages, which must be at all times obeyed, for most dire consequences follow their disregard or violation. These two laws are as follows: (1) That on no account must a charge be demanded for revealing spiritual truths; and (2) that all money received by the teacher as a result of his work, must be regarded as the Lord’s, and used accordingly. Of course, the teacher must live, but after his modest or reasonable needs have been met, the surplus must be used for the Lord’s work. With regard to the first law we need not say anything now, except that George Muller went to the extreme of refusing a salary as a minister and pastor, even abolishing collections, so that he and his wife had to rely upon love offerings entirely. But, regarding the second law, George Muller obeyed the Lord in his own life and conduct, and taught others to do the same, even though they were engaged in trade, business, or profession. He not only relied entirely upon the Lord for his income, but as his income grew, as it did continually, for he was greatly pros-

“THE MOTIVE OF SERVICE.” 75

pered, he still lived as modestly as ever, and gave the very large surplus back to the Lord’s work. Thus, while his income, entirely without any seeking on his part, grew to over £3,000 per annum, he yet lived in the same modest style, on a very small proportion, while the remainder was given to the Lord’s work.

If George Muller had said: “This money is mine, I will save it for my old age, or for a rainy day”; or had he spent it in luxury, then he would not have prospered. Most assuredly he would have come down to want, just as many, since his day, have come down, through falling into this sin. George Muller knew the law, and by the grace of God he followed it, consistently and unfailingly.

Everyone is agreed that religious teachers should not teach for gain, that is, as a livelihood, and that they should not live luxurious lives. Men like Father Dolling, who lived and died amongst the poor, sharing their hardships and troubles, command the respect of all. But it may come as a surprise to some to learn that business also is under the same law. That is to say, business should not be engaged in for the sake of getting a living, or for making money. George Muller, in the theological language of his day, says that the “believer,” is not his own, having been bought with the precious blood of Christ. Therefore, he belongs to Jesus Christ, and everything he does is done to the Lord, and not for himself. He does not engage in business or a profession, or any calling, in order to earn a living for himself and his wife and family, but in order to serve the Lord. For some years I have been teaching the same thing, but in different language, and using more modern terms. Henry Ford preaches the same truth, and illustrates it in his life, by becoming the richest



man in the world. He has become such through trying not to be. In other words, Henry Ford has done in the business world exactly what George Muller did in the religious world. He put his job, i.e., service to the public, first; his duty to his employees next; and himself last. Further, he passed profits on to the public and his employees, and put the remainder back into industry. Golden Rule Nash did much the same thing, and he, too, experienced an embarrassing flood of prosperity. Those who obey the law, working through the initial difficulties, become so prosperous it is difficult to know how to employ the money that keeps flowing in. But it flows in only so long as it is regarded in the light of trust money, belonging to the Lord, or to life, or our work, and consequently is given back for use.

Henry Ford started out to make automobiles, not money; and because he never wavered, or acted in a way unworthy of his principles and convictions, he made his automobiles, and, incidentally, has become so rich that life would be a burden to him if he thought the wealth was his. Golden Rule Nash started out to make clothing, and to improve his work-people's conditions. He had no idea of making money, and no ambition that way. When he doubled and trebled his work-people's wages, he genuinely thought that it would bring him to ruin and bankruptcy. Yet he decided to do it, as a matter of conscience and principle. His amazing success as a clothing manufacturer reads like a tale from the Arabian nights. Profits came so fast and plentifully as to become embarrassing. They were passed back to the Public, and distributed amongst the work-people, and also returned to industry.

All this is by the way, but it proves that the laws which govern a spiritual ministry, govern business

just the same. Professor Drummond wrote a famous book entitled *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*. It would be equally possible to write one on *Spiritual Law in the Business World*.

Much has been written on this subject, in a theoretical way, but it is very few who put the teaching into practice. Yet it is the secret of true success in business, and, what is of far greater importance, stability and liberty. Acquisitiveness brings with it many evils. In fact there is a curse with it. Success through service to man, and love to the Lord, brings with it freedom, happiness, and many forms of good, including Love, friends, and peace of mind. All this is dependent upon the Golden Rule being observed, and the surplus being given back or passed on. As soon as we hold and retain, saying this is mine, either the supply fails, or what we hold begins to curse our life.

I said just now that this way of life leads to liberty. George Muller puts the same truth in another way. He says: "It is quite true that, in general, the Lord provides the necessaries of life by means of our ordinary calling; but that that is not *the reason* why we should work, is plain enough from the consideration, that if our possessing the necessaries of life depended upon our ability of working, we could never have *freedom from anxiety*; for we should always have to say to ourselves: And what shall I do when I am too old to work? Or when, by reason of sickness, I am unable to earn my bread? But if, on the other hand, we are engaged in our earthly calling because *it is the will of the Lord concerning us that we should work*, and that thus labouring we may provide for our families and also be able to support the weak, the sick, the aged, and the needy, then we have good and scriptural reason to say to



ourselves: Should it please the Lord to lay me on a bed of sickness, or keep me otherwise, by reason of infirmity, or old age, or want of employment, from earning my bread by means of the labour of my hands, or my business, or my profession, He will yet provide for me." Then he goes on to explain that because we work for the Lord and not for self, therefore, just as an earthly master pays wages to his men, so also will our heavenly Father provide us with all that is necessary.

The reader will notice that George Muller believed that the Lord lays people on beds of sickness. If he had believed that God would keep people in health if they trusted the Lord, he would have found this to be as true as the fact that God supplies all our temporal needs to the extent that we trust Him.

#### WHAT WE EXPECT FROM THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE, THAT WE RECEIVE.

Most assuredly if we expect disease and affliction they will come to us. The remedy is obvious. Disease and sickness, however, are no more in the Divine Providence than are poverty and financial trouble, but, if we believe they are, then we open ourselves to inimical forces, which, while they have no power in God, and are outside the Divine Providence, yet have power on their own plane. In believing that sickness and disease are sent by the Lord, we put ourselves outside the Divine Providence, as far as these things are concerned. In the same way, if we believe that God sends accidents, such things become possible in our experience. In

fact I ought to have put it the reverse way. I ought to have said that, in the natural course of events, we are subject to these happenings, but if we live in the consciousness of the Divine Providence and Protection as taught in the 91st Psalm, we become protected to the extent that we hide ourselves in God.

There is everything that we need laid up for us in the Divine Providence, but if we do not believe it, it remains outside our experience. There is all good, both temporal and spiritual, in the One and Only Source of Good. It becomes ours to the extent that we trust God for it, recognizing and acknowledging that good does not come from our natural selves, but from God only.

George Muller argued also that a Christian, because he is a Christian, should always work, even though there might be no profit attached to his work. For instance, the state of market might be such that it would not pay to work. If a man were working for gain, he, naturally, would leave off working. But the Christian would go on working even though he got back only the cost price of his material, and gave his labour for nothing. This is entirely in harmony with the Rotary principle of Service before Profits. To continue working keeps one healthy, free from discontent and depression, and out of mischief and temptation. It is the experience of those who have tried it, that working from a sense of duty, working for the work's sake, working as service, and working as unto the Lord, instead of for a living, or to make money, or in order to hoard up wealth, brings blessing into the life. It brings ease and liberty in financial affairs. One is entirely free from care and anxiety, because the Eternal is our Paymaster, and the Infinite Good is our ever-



lasting supply—a supply that can never fail; a supply that can never dry up; a supply that can never be cut off.

When one sees the number of professing followers of Jesus Christ who are full of care and anxiety over financial affairs, one longs to explain to them the secret of the care-free life. But it is not easy, for they seem to be a thousand miles away from even a rudimentary or elementary idea of living the life of faith and trust in God, and dependence upon Divine Law, instead of upon their own efforts. They separate their spiritual life from their temporal life, and because of this are defenceless in a grabbing, grasping, avaricious world, in which it is a case of every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost. They will not believe that the life of faith and trust is possible; but it is possible, and such a life is one of restfulness and peace, harmony and certainty, happiness and joy.

From the foregoing it will be seen that no matter what business we may be engaged in, nor which profession we may follow, we have to realize and acknowledge that the business connection or professional clientele is not ours, but belongs to the Eternal, the Lord or Father who is our One and Only Source of all Good. Because of this, we dare not, for Love's sake, neglect our business, because it is our Father's business. We also put into it our strength, our best effort, skill and industry, because the work is just as much the Lord's as conducting a mission, or being pastor to a church of people.

We are, therefore, freed from anxiety to the extent that we can work from this motive, and live in this consciousness.

Also, it is seen that if our business, calling, or work, is the Lord's, then all the money that comes

to us is His also. So that after our needs, and those of our business, are met, the balance should be devoted to the Lord's work. Some may say: "I would gladly do this if I had enough surplus, but, alas, I have not enough to make ends meet now, and I should have even less if I gave any to the Lord." Here an effort of faith is required. If tithing is practised, it is found that there is no loss, but that ease and liberty in financial affairs follow. It must not be done, however, with the object of making or getting more money, for if this is the motive, no blessing follows. First ten per cent. can be given to the Lord, says George Muller, and then, as we are prospered, it can rise to twenty per cent., and even fifty per cent., if there is much surplus. He gives some instances of great prosperity coming to those who practised giving all they could to the Lord, and one might be led to infer from this, that all who practise tithing have to pass through the same experience. This would fill most of our readers with alarm and misgiving, as to have to have the responsibility of the stewardship of either wealth or a large income is the last thing they desire. They need not be alarmed, however, as it is only a few of the Lord's people who are called to such a responsibility, and what to most people would be an irksome burden. The majority must live quiet and ordinary lives, but with liberty in all things relating to the supply of their temporal needs.

George Muller did not advocate a mode of life that would make people rich, but rather he advocated the giving away of all available surplus so as not to hoard or have possessions. What he did advocate was a life lived in harmony with Divine Law, a life that is blessed in consequence, being filled with harmony and peace. It was not a mean



life, stinted of any necessary good thing, but a life of sufficiency, and of ease in financial affairs. To the one who is blessed in this way, all necessary good flows to him in a most harmonious and easy fashion. There is no anxious care or effort, but only a calm looking toward the Lord, the One and Only Source of Good.

## PART I.—CHAPTER X.

## "THE BLESSING OF THE LORD."

*"The Lord is my Shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing."*

THERE is a little pamphlet written by George Muller, entitled *Scriptural Advice to Christians Concerning their Earthly Occupation*, price 1d., published by The Bible and Tract Warehouse, 78, Park Street, Bristol. It is written in language that must sound quaint to modern readers. But when stripped of its old-fashioned phraseology or translated into modern language, it will be seen that it is rich in wisdom. Whatever Muller says must be respected, for, like Jacob Beilhart, he proved the truth of all his contentions, he lived the life of faith, and made a success of it. People, nowadays, demand success of their leaders. Their complaint is that Christianity will not work, that it is of no practical value, and that those who teach it do so only in an academical way, and not from life. Let them therefore turn to the lives of Muller and Beilhart and learn from their practical experience. Strangely enough, Muller was a German, both by birth and upbringing, while Beilhart was the son of a German. Thus the country that produced the greatest Mystics and Theologians,

also produced the greatest experimentalists, one who proved the existence of a living God, the other, that of an unvarying Law.

In respect of their phraseology and theology they were as far apart as the poles; but as regards actual experience they were, at heart, one.

They both taught and practised that we should not work for self or for gain, but in a spirit of service. We belong to Life, therefore, we should give all our best work and service to Life. If we do this, while those to whom we minister may yet in no wise reward us (perhaps indeed be of themselves unable to), then others will assuredly do so, through the operation of an unvarying Law. George Muller ministered to orphan children. They could not reward him, but other people did. He "cast his bread on the waters, and it returned after many days." The great tragedy of life is that man demands a return or reward for all that he does, either in money, or praise. Only too often the thought is: "what shall I get out of it?" But the teaching of these two lives is that if we give our best to Life, then Life in some way, often most unexpectedly and mysteriously, pays back far more than we have given.

Both of these giants of faith refused to possess wealth, although money came freely to them. Both parted with it as quickly as possible. This is partly the secret of their success. If we are to be recipients of Divine Bounty we must regard everything as belonging to Life, or to the Lord as George Muller would have said, or to Spirit, as Jacob Beilhart would have expressed it. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." *Prov. xi, 24*. If we hold what comes to us as "ours," then we unconsciously trust in our possessions instead of

in the Lord, which means to rely on the Spirit, or to trust in Life itself, the consequence being that Divine Supply ceases in so far as we are concerned. Consequently, adversity and lean times may then come upon us. Muller describes this in his quaint way as the Lord by chastisement taking away our earthly possessions. This is merely saying the same thing in other language. The Lord does not chastise us really, for we chastise ourselves. We cut ourselves off from the Universal Life and Its Abundance, by acting in a personal and selfish, acquisitive way, instead of in a universal way. He writes: "Beloved brethren in the Lord, let us take heed so to walk as that the Lord may not be obliged, by chastisement, to take a part of our earthly possessions from us in the way of bad debts, sickness, decrease of business, or the like, because we would not own our position as *stewards*, but act as owners, and keep for ourselves the means with which the Lord had entrusted us, not for the gratification of our own carnal mind, but for the sake of using them in His service and to His praise. It might also be said by a brother whose earnings are small, Should I also give according to my earnings? They are already so small that my wife can only with the greatest difficulty manage to make them sufficient for the family. My reply is, Have you ever considered, my brother, that the very reason why the Lord is obliged to let your earnings remain so small may be the fact of your spending everything upon yourself, and that if He were to give you more, you would only use it to increase your own family comfort, instead of looking about to see who among the brethren are sick, or who have no work at all, that you might help them, or how you might assist the work of God at home and abroad? There is a great



temptation for a brother whose earnings are small, to put off the responsibility of assisting the needy and sick saints, or helping on the work of God, and to lay it upon the few rich brethren and sisters with whom he is associated in fellowship, and thus rob his own soul!—It might be asked, How much shall I give of my income—the tenth part, or the fifth part, or the third part, or one-half, or more? My reply is, God lays down no rule concerning this point. What we do we should do cheerfully and not of necessity. But if even Jacob with the first dawning of spiritual light (Gen. xxviii, 22) promised to God the tenth of all He should give to him, how much ought we believers in the Lord Jesus to do for Him; we, whose calling is a heavenly one, and *who know distinctly* that we are children of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus! Yet do all the children of God give even the *tenth* part of what the Lord gives them? That would be two shillings per week for the brother who earns one pound, and four shillings to him who earns two pounds, and two pounds per week to him whose income is twenty pounds per week.

"In connection with 1 Cor. xvi, 2, I would mention two other portions: (1) 'He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully' (2 Cor. ix, 6.) It is certain that we children of God are so abundantly blessed in Jesus, by the grace of God, that we ought to need no stimulus to good works. The forgiveness of our sins, the having been made for ever the children of God, the having before us the Father's house as our home; these blessings ought to be sufficient motives to constrain us, in love and gratitude, to serve God abundantly all the days of our life, and cheerfully also to give up, as He may

call for it, that with which He has entrusted us of the things of this world. But whilst this is the case, the Lord nevertheless holds out to us in His Holy Word motives why we should serve Him, deny ourselves, use our property for Him, etc., and the last-mentioned passage is one of that kind. The verse is true both with reference to the life that now is and that which is to come. If we have been sparingly using our property for Him, there will have been little treasure laid up in heaven, and therefore a small amount of capital will be found in the world to come, so far as it regards reaping. Again, we shall reap bountifully if we seek to be rich towards God, by abundantly using our means for Him, whether in ministering to the necessities of the poor saints, or using otherwise our pecuniary means for His work."

Our Lord Jesus said that we cannot serve two masters, God and Mammon; and how true this is can be rightly apprehended only by those who attempt to live a life of faith after the manner taught and exemplified by George Muller. If we adopt worldly methods, saying: "This or that is mine, and I will not only hold what I have, but will compel others to pay me what they owe," then we are serving Mammon, and cannot serve God, for our Lord's words are absolutely true. Whereas if we serve Life and look upon nothing as our own, but as belonging to Life, so that we are only stewards of that which we seemingly possess, and if we pass on that which we receive, relying upon Life to send more to take its place, we serve God and are delivered from the power of Mammon.

Jacob Beilhart found it necessary to part with all he possessed, in order that he might prove to the world the great truth that one who serves Life in love,

instead of for reward, is blessed and prospered in all things, and that he can never lack.

But this is not so with the ordinary man, who is content to follow, rather than to lead. In the ordinary way, we are not called upon to part with our goods, or allow unprincipled people to take what little we have away from us. What God requires of us, what Life demands, is that we should surrender ourselves and all that we have, inwardly, in love to the Whole : that we should dedicate our all to Service, in love to our fellow man. It is surrender of the heart and the motive that is required, an *inward* yielding up of all that we have, not merely an outward giving up of whatever we might happen to possess.

## PART I.—CHAPTER XI.

### “PAYING OUR WAY.”

*“Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down . . . and running over. . . . For with the same measure ye meet withal it shall be measured to you again.”*

IN contrast with the many modern teachers of Mind Magic under various high-sounding titles, George Muller never expected from life, at any time, something for nothing. He rendered the highest possible service to life, looking to Life (the Lord) to reward him, or support him. While, in one sense, it was his faith that brought to pass all necessary support of his work, yet it was his service to humanity that was the cause of it. His faith without the service would not have availed; neither would his service without faith have enabled him to accomplish his life-work. Put briefly, the secret of George Muller's success was faith and service. There was also another contributory factor about which I will speak later.

By service I do not mean that George Muller performed certain service for people, and that those whom he served rewarded him according to what he did for them. This was certainly true of his ministerial life, for he refused a salary from the Church over which he was pastor, and also would



not allow collections at the door. Instead, he put up a box in the Church, and though he never asked for a penny yet he did not hesitate to point out to his congregation that it was their duty and privilege to support the work to the utmost of their ability. Therefore, in the matter of his pastorate I admit that it is true that George Muller rendered service which those who sat under his ministry duly rewarded in the form of free-will offerings. But this was only a tiny part of George Muller's life's work and activities. Compared with his Orphanages, the pastorate and its liabilities were but a rivulet in a vast ocean. In establishing and maintaining his Orphanages, his Bible and Missionary Societies, he rendered service to life and the world through thousands of poor orphan and homeless children, through the distribution of Bibles, and through Missionaries. They could not reward him, neither could they help to meet current expenses. But while they could not reward George Muller, nor support his work financially, there were other people who could and did. Those who helped him and his work could not possibly derive any personal benefit in return. That is to say: they might give their money to Muller for his Orphanages, but he could not give them anything in return. In other words, both he and those who supported him and his work served life without hope of reward or any return for work performed or money given. And this is the point that I am trying to bring out, viz., that we must serve Life, or serve the Lord (as Muller would have termed it), without thinking of what we shall receive, or not receive, in return. There are principles which govern our life—they are the principles of Life. If our life is lived according to these principles all is well, and harmony reigns in place of vexation and struggle. We enter

into liberty, liberation and freedom, all things coming to us at the right time and in sufficient abundance, without worry, care or strain. This is not put forward as a new method of making money. It is an age-long, and, shall we say, secret, method of escape from the tyranny and power of money. It is necessary to our spiritual life, for we cannot serve God and Mammon. Either we are in a state of liberty, or we are not.

However, this is by the way. One of these great underlying principles governing our life is service. Most of us have to work, but do we serve? Do we work in a spirit of service? Do we work for Life and our fellows? ("Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.") Or do we merely work for self, in order to make a living?

George Muller goes right down to this fundamental principle when he counsels all to work, even when such work is unremunerative, and one has to give his services for nothing. So long as we work for self, or for gain, or for what we can get out of it, merely, we are serving Mammon. We are certainly not serving Life, or as Muller puts it, the Lord.

We must all work, for life would be intolerable boredom without it. But the question that we all have to ask ourselves is, What is the spirit in which we work, and what is our object in working? Is it merely to make a living? Is it to make money so that we can retire from work and live on interest? Is it for fame, honour, or to be well spoken of? Is it in order to become prosperous, and well-to-do, so as to be lifted above all our friends and neighbours, and to become an object of envy and admiration? All these objects are unworthy. If we are successful in such aims and objects we become



divorced from the true life of man, our spiritual life becomes dead: and, because we serve the god of this world (self and self-interest), we are at the mercy of the inimical forces of the world.

As George Muller teaches, not only must we work, but we must work in a spirit of true service. We must serve Life, and not self. We must be as St. Paul said: "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." This does not mean merely business as generally understood, but our attitude towards life. Dr. Weymouth has it: "Be not indolent, . . . be thoroughly warmhearted, the Lord's own servants." We are therefore to serve life in our day and generation; serve our fellow-man who is our neighbour, our own nation, yes, and all humanity, with warm-heartedness, zeal, and enthusiasm and with no thought of self. Thou shalt love the Lord . . . with all thy mind and strength, etc., and thy neighbour as thyself. If we love, we desire to serve the one whom we love. This is the test of all claims to the sacred term "love." True love demands nothing, seeks nothing for its own, but desires only to give. If we love God and our neighbour we desire only to give, to serve, to pour out all that we have at the feet of Life.

Mr. Hector Waylen, the author of the book *An Apostle of Healing*, tells me of a Glossop woman who once said to Pastor Howton's wife: "If I had your faith, Mrs. Howton, I would sit all day by the fire and do nothing." Mr. Waylen adds: "What curious notions people get." True, such notions are curious, but they are widespread and universal. It is the ambition of many to live without working. What they desire is a parasitic life, in which they take everything, but give nothing in return. This is against the principle of Life, and those who try to

act in this manner bring a blight upon themselves. How different is the conduct of those who live in harmony with the principle of Life!

George Muller, Jacob Beilhart and others gave their best service to Life and their fellows and left the issue with Life. They depended upon principle, the definite law of Life, which can never fail or change, and they were not disappointed. Great industrialists have tested the same law by thinking first of their work and service, and last of what they would get out of their business, and have become tremendously successful in consequence. They are not able, however, to persuade others to follow their example. This is always the case. Pioneers have to tread a lonely road. It is so in order that they may stand out as great, solitary figures, which act as land marks to guide those who come after them. What is exceptional to-day, becomes the commonplace of to-morrow.

Service rendered as a gift or love-offering to Life: work that is engaged in, not for self or for profit, but as an act of love and service, these bring to the doer a harvest of blessing. The trials and disasters which blast the life of others pass him by; not because he is a favourite of Heaven, but because he has worked in harmony with the principle of Life, while others have worked against it.

Whittled down to a few words it can all be summed up in the following: Love God, trust God—serve Life, trust Life. This is the only road to liberty. It is only in this way that we can strike off the shackles of the great monster, Mammon. We must serve God or Mammon (self and self-interest), we cannot serve them both. The selfless life is alone the life of liberty and freedom.



PART I.—CHAPTER XII.

“WITHOUT ADVERTISEMENT.”

*“Naught shall be withholden from him who walketh uprightly.”*

CRITICS of George Muller have been mainly of two classes. There have been those who have said that the fact that he made no appeals to the public was such an extraordinary thing it naturally attracted attention amongst religious, charitably-minded folk. They have argued that the very fact that he refused to ask for help gave him far greater publicity, and appealed to the generosity of the charitable more than any appeals could possibly do. According to them, to do what George Muller did is quite easy. A very simple reply quickly crumples such critics up. It is the question: “Why do not you do the same as George Muller?” The people who argue in this way are invariably engaged in conducting religious or charitable work. Therefore, I say to them, why do you go to all the trouble of organising Bazaars, Whist Drives, etc., or to the expense of employing collectors, of advertising, or to the exhausting labour of organizing committees, fresh schemes for attracting money, and all the other nerve-racking methods that you use in order to keep things going, pay interest on debts, commissions to

“ WITHOUT ADVERTISEMENT.” 95

collectors, and so on? If it is so easy to do as George Muller and others have done, if it is so simple, why not do likewise, and thus at one stroke cut out all the labour, anxiety, care, expense, intense activity and commercialism by means of which your religious organizations are kept going? They have no answer, of course. They are not willing to prove to the world the truth of their assertion that to act in the same way as did George Muller is easy. If it is so easy and simple, why do not they follow it? If anyone thinks that conducting a work relying by faith, solely upon God and Divine Law and Principle without making any appeals to the public is easy, let him try it, and see how he gets on! To live a life of faith in utter dependence upon God is very simple. It is the simplest life possible. It is the only life entirely free from the complications which afflict all those who depend upon human effort and finite wisdom. But while it is simple it is far from easy. Let those who say it is easy try living such a life, and see for themselves: or, if they have not sufficient courage to do this, let them read the biography of George Muller, honestly, and judge accordingly. It is not claimed that such a life is easy, although simple and free from all complications; but it is claimed that it is possible. George Muller did not start his Orphanages merely to provide homes for destitute orphans, but rather in order to provide an object-lesson in living by faith, for the encouragement of Christian people. He proved by what he accomplished that such a life is possible. He proved that God is a living God who responds to every need, if we only put our entire trust in Him, or in the Divine Power and the Divine Law that never change.

Like most erroneous statements, however, there



is a certain amount of truth in the criticism. The worst lies are half or partial truths, because the modicum of truth contained in the untrue statement is misleading to those who have not sufficient insight to detect the deceit. It is true that a work conducted in faith with an entire absence of begging appeals, and of what is called vulgarly in modern slang "sob-stuff," and of advertising dodges, appeals to religiously minded charitable people, *when they discover it.*

But what is going to happen to the work and those who conduct it during the time which must elapse before it is discovered by the charitably minded? It takes years for a work or movement to become known to what might be termed its own public. After many years, George Muller's work was known to so many people that the income from free-will offerings amounted to between twenty and thirty thousand pounds (between a hundred and a hundred and fifty thousand dollars) per annum; yet the first donation that came to him after much prayer and waiting was 1/-, this being given by a missionary as poor as Muller himself. How many people in like circumstances would have kept on, in the face of such discouraging beginning? It took many years for the amount of donations to increase. It necessitated continual prayer, indomitable faith, and patient waiting. Is it easy? Let those who think so, just try it.

The second criticism is that although George Muller prided himself upon the fact that he never advertised, yet he made use of publicity, and that without such publicity he could never have gathered together such vast sums of money for his Orphanages. The critics say—or, rather, said—that he employed two methods of publicity, one a Yearly Report, and the other preaching all over England

and in many parts of the world. While it is true that both these things may have been indirectly a source of publicity, yet the charge fails, for neither was embarked upon in order to raise money for the Orphanages. The Yearly Report was an account of his stewardship and not an attempt to raise money in any way. If it had the effect of encouraging people to give, it was certainly incidental, for no one was asked to give; in fact, in some cases, money was returned to the donors, and in other cases was accepted only after arguments and protests had failed to persuade the givers to refrain from giving.

It is true that George Muller, in addition to acknowledging in his Report the sums of money sent him, and describing the progress made in his philanthropic work, also reproduced large numbers of letters sent him by donors. But the object of this was simply to increase the faith of those Christians into whose hands the pamphlet might fall. The object of the whole undertaking was to provide an object-lesson in faith to those whose faith needed to be strengthened, so what method could be better than this, of publishing letters from those whose gifts to the work were a triumph of faith in a living God? Many were blessed through this publication, and no doubt thousands were led to subscribe, voluntarily, through its ministry. And here we touch the very heart of the matter. The object of advertising is to persuade or compel people to part with their money. When the one who is influenced by it pays away his money he does so reluctantly. He feels as though it had been taken from him by force, or at best he is not a cheerful giver, or he has a subconscious idea that he has been foolish, or that he has been "done." An inward vow is made, not to be



"done" again, or there is a feeling that one does not want to be overpersuaded again.

On the other hand, a simple account of a good work being done, accompanied by no advertising or begging appeal, inspires one to give voluntarily, simply from love and a desire to co-operate, not only once, but many times. No doubt this little book of mine will inspire in many a desire to give to Muller's Orphanages at Ashley Down, Bristol; but if Muller had advertised or begged for money, I would never have written it, consequently all that money would have been lost to the work. It will be seen, then, that it is because Muller never advertised or tried in any way to persuade people to send him money that this book is being written, while this in turn may cause people to support the Orphanages. And this in spite of the fact that Muller has been dead for 30 years or more. Here we see the lasting, good effect of putting the Kingdom first, of putting first things first, of working upon lines that are in harmony with certain definite Divine Laws. It reverses the words of Shakespeare, that "the evil that men do lives after them, the good lies buried with their bones"; for it is the good that they have done, their acts of faith, that live after them, while their mistakes and the errors they may have made are forgotten.

The other criticism, viz., that George Muller advertised his work through his preaching activities, is soon disposed of. In the first place, he established his Orphanages and became famous before he began his world-wide preaching tours. Secondly, it was detrimental to the work rather than beneficial, for him to leave it for long periods at a stretch. And thirdly, during his preaching tours George Muller would not accept money for his orphanages, but

confined his preaching to the Word of God. He was most careful to avoid even a semblance of publicity. Crowds of people came to hear him because of his fame: he did not preach in order to make either himself or his work famous. If George Muller had been one who worked on human lines he would probably have taken advantage of the opportunity to boost his work. But, because he depended upon prayer (or, rather, upon God, for prayer is only a means to an end, the finding of God), he did nothing of the kind. Because he acted in this way, putting the Kingdom first, his preaching tours were a great success. If he had acted otherwise his preaching tour would have been a failure, and his work for the Orphanages jeopardised.

Modern critics also may assert that George Muller had a very powerful mind and that his long hours and sometimes whole nights of prayer were times of intense concentration upon the sums of money that were required for the Orphanages, and that this affected weaker or "suggestible" minds through telepathy, or thought transference. No one who knows anything about prayer and living by faith would ever make such a suggestion. Practisers of magic work in this way. They concentrate upon the amount of money that they need until some poor wretch, generally a suggestible relative, has to pay them the money. But prayer is entirely different from this. It is a turning to God with the desire in the heart that we may be brought into complete harmony with the Will of God, and that His work may be accomplished through the Divine Spirit working unimpeded through us. Our prayer also is a casting of ourselves upon God, so that there should not be a shred of self left. It is also expressing a trust in God to the extent of giving all to God, so that if the



work fails through lack of means, then so let it be, if such is the will of God. It is God's work, and He is quite capable of supplying its needs, therefore, if we will only let Him, there can be no question about supply or support. We need pray only in order to know that all is well. All is well, always, in reality and truth, but it is not all well in manifestation, if there is doubt and fear in our heart. The Reality cannot manifest so long as fear and doubt have us in their clutches. When, however, fear is dispelled, and we enter the all-is-well-consciousness, then the Reality, and the abundance of the Reality, manifest outwardly. There is no lack or shortage or restriction in the Divine Reality, but the Divine Plenty cannot manifest if we are in a state of fear, doubt or mistrust, therefore the object of prayer is to cast out fear, to restore faith, to enable us to trust completely, and finally to realize that all is well. Then the truth about God manifests.

Actually it is not necessary to pray for temporal supply, but we may spend much time in prayer, for the sheer enjoyment of it. It is through prayer that we enjoy God. Prayer is the exercising of the upper or spiritual mind, the communion of the soul with its Lord. The lower mind, or intellect, cannot know God; but the upper, or spiritual mind can do so, and when we have found God in this way, nothing else matters.

This is possible as a result of thought-control and mind discipline, in addition to yielding the heart and will to God. All who have learnt to find God and to enjoy Him in this way, have done so through first learning to control their thought, and to discipline their mind. To know God is to lose fear and doubt, and this leads to liberty and freedom, in the outward and so-called practical affairs of life.

## A Venture of Faith.

PART II.

---

The Principles of George Muller.



PART II.—CHAPTER I.

HIS SECRET OF SUCCESS.

*“Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.”*

It would be possible to write indefinitely about the life and work of George Muller, but sufficient has been said, I think, to shew what manner of man he was, and also to shew how we in our small way may live a similar life of faith. No attempt has been made to give any complete account of his life, but those who wish to read such a biography can do so, for there are several books which give a full and detailed history.

I have not attached too much importance to the work by which George Muller is most widely known, viz., the Bristol Orphanages. Rather am I interested in the character of the man himself, and the psychology of his work and achievements. I find that there are others who have achieved work just as great and remarkable. For instance, there is the work of William Quarrier who founded the Orphan Homes of Scotland forty-seven years ago. With it go hand in hand the Consumptive Sanatoria, and the Colony for Epileptics, 80 buildings in all, necessitating an income of some £70,000 per annum, all carried on



by free-will offerings. William Quarrier was a poor boy, who starved and shivered in the streets of Glasgow. It is said that as he starved and shivered while watching streams of well-fed and well-clothed people passing by, he determined that if ever he became rich, he would help poor, hungry, shivering little boys like himself. He grew up, and by means of great industry and perseverance became prosperous, and was able to start his scheme for the succour and help of orphan and destitute children. The work is still carried on without advertising or appeals, and letters should be addressed to Miss Quarrier, Bridge of Weir, Scotland.

In *The Friend* of April 25th, 1930, I read of the starting of the Fowler Orphanage in Cairo by a Miss Smith. In spite of every discouragement, and hindrance possible, this work grew from nothing (nothing visible) to what it is at the present day. From the beginning of the Orphanage in 1906 until the present day, all the running expenses have been supplied through prayer and voluntary gifts only.

There are and have been other charitable works started in faith and conducted by entire dependence upon God. Muller's is the largest of them, but it is not the magnitude of his work that attracts us, but a study of the man himself. The story of his life is a long record of testings bravely and victoriously met, of continuous adventures in faith, and of complete surrender to the Divine Will. It is a convincing and inspiring testimony to the power of prayer to overcome every difficulty and to achieve the impossible.

It is not easy to put in a nutshell the secret of George Muller's success as a man of faith, but I will attempt to do so. He always moved along certain lines and acted according to definite laws and principles. George Muller knew the Law governing

temporal supply; he was acquainted with the Principle behind it, and he worked in harmony with this Law and Principle without deviation. To do so tested his faith to the utmost, at times, but he never faltered. He went steadily forward, conquering every difficulty. His life proved the truth, right up to the hilt, of that which he set out to prove. George Muller's mission in life was not to start and maintain the largest orphanage in the world, but to demonstrate to weaker people that God is a living God, and that our temporal supply and prosperity come from the Lord (*i.e.*, from the Infinite and Invisible), as a result of faith and prayer.

Through personal experience, in my own small way, I have proved the same truth. In reading the life of George Muller I have been able to endorse everything he says. It confirms all that I had found out for myself, through my much more limited experience. The principle is the same always, both in small matters and large. George Muller puts it in different language, but the truth is the same. Truth is always the same, in spite of the difference in the language employed by those who expound it. God does not change, the Law remains the same, and Principle is always unaltered and unalterable.



PART II.—CHAPTER II.

PRINCIPLE I.

“GOD, THE SOURCE OF SUPPLY.”

1st. *George Muller believed that the Lord is the source of all supply.* To the poor man, who slaved early and late to support his wife and children, he said that it was not his labour that supplied his needs, but the Lord; and that if he were to work less, and to read the Bible and pray more, he would be more prosperous. The man did not believe him. He said in his heart, “If now that I work almost day and night I can only just manage to support my family, what is going to become of them if I work less?” It was this darkness and lack of faith that made George Muller long to prove to such people, by a great act of faith, and its consequent vindication, that the material supplies of life have their source and origin in the Spiritual world and not in our labour and carefulness: that there is a higher Law of supply to which we have access, through faith.

It is impossible to emphasize this point too much. *The Lord is our Source of material supply, and not man.* Supply comes *through* man, but it comes *from* the Lord. It is controlled by the Lord, the one Infinite Creative Guiding Spirit, and not by, say, our

GOD, THE SOURCE OF SUPPLY. 107

competitors. Because our Source of supply, both spiritual and temporal, is the Infinite Spirit, our supply is unlimited and inexhaustible: it can never fail.

When once we realize this great truth, everything becomes changed: we look upon life with different eyes. We can say joyfully: “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want,” accepting the literal meaning of the words, and not their larger and cosmic significance. We realize that we have become connected up to inexhaustible and invisible supplies. Our barrel of meal can never fail; our cruse of oil can never become empty. Though all men fail us, and all material sources fail, God is the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and if we put our entire trust in Him, we can never fail, because God, by His very nature, can never fail us.

Some may say: “that is a very fine theory, but are there any who put it into practice? Why, even those who teach these things adopt every possible kind of trick in order to get money?” If this is the case it is because they have not worked through their apprenticeship in the way that George Muller did. He not only understood the laws and principles which govern the life lived by faith in, and dependence upon, God, but he tested and proved them; and in so doing, entered into ever-increasing liberty.

Let it be noted, then, that the first rule or principle upon which George Muller based his life and conduct was that the Lord is the Source of all temporal supply, and not man. Life is spiritual, and is governed by Spirit.



PART II.—CHAPTER III.

PRINCIPLE II.

“THE PRACTICAL TESTING.”

2nd. *Believing that the Lord was his one and only source, and his unfailing and inexhaustible source, of supply, the next step was to test and prove the truth of his belief.* This George Muller proceeded to do, as soon as ever he launched out on the Spiritual life. The first thing he did was to give up his position, because the missionary society, by which he was employed, would not allow him to give up his salary and depend instead upon free-will offerings. Young Muller wrote to the Society explaining that the Lord wanted him to receive no salary, and also for him to go where He led him. But the Society said in effect, though not in actual words, that they knew what was best, much better than the Lord did, and that he must continue to work for a salary and do as he was told, not by the Lord, but by them. So, quite naturally, George Muller left them, in love and good-will, and, quite as naturally, found a pastorate. As soon as he was settled he refused his salary, and never afterwards did he accept one. He depended upon the Lord to send what was necessary through the Spirit of Love which was alive in the hearts of His people, both for his beloved work, and

“ THE PRACTICAL TESTING.” 109

for his own personal needs. Money sent especially for his own support in lieu of a salary rose from about £160 per annum, to over £3,000. Mr. and Mrs. Muller lived very modestly, even humbly, however, and most of this money was passed on to the Lord's work.

But this was only the beginning of things; it was but a minute portion of the whole. George Muller made much greater ventures in faith than this matter of salary. He launched out into the deep when he started his Orphanages. The financial burdens and obligations which he gladly undertook to bear were enough to frighten the most courageous heart. But his faith never wavered, although Muller was tested to the last straw. It is a mystical truth—that is, it is true of the spiritual or regenerative life—that when we start testing God (or life), then God through life's experiences begins to test us. It is through this dual process that our faith is built up, and we become advanced in spiritual things.



## PART II.—CHAPTER IV.

### PRINCIPLE III.

#### “THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER.”

3rd. *George Muller sustained and maintained his faith through prayer.* His great achievements were made possible, and his great victories were won, in his study where he spent hours and hours in prayer and in reading the Bible. In prayer he poured out his heart to God, telling Him everything: in the reading of the Scriptures he found God speaking to him. This is much safer than listening to voices, or what is thought to be the voice of God. Portions of Scripture become illumined in a wonderful way, bringing to us just the message that we need.

George Muller, although, probably, he did not know it, was the pioneer, or one of the greatest pioneers, of a new and better way of life. This way is not the way of acquisitiveness, of possessions, of holding, defending, fighting for a share of the world's wealth, but of letting go, of dependence upon the Divine Invisible, instead of upon one's own efforts, or material laws and worldly conditions. We cannot control, directly, the visible. That is to say, if a thing has happened, it *has* happened. If a ship has been wrecked, or some other happening has taken place, it is useless to deny that such is the

#### “ THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER.” 111

case. In the Invisible, however, is the Cause of outward happenings. Through prayer we work in the world of Cause. Afterwards, the result of our prayer is seen manifested in the outward life. On no account should we adopt an attitude of “let it slide and hope for the best.” Nothing is achieved in that way. Working in the Invisible is the highest possible form of mental and spiritual activity. To achieve through the “Inward” is not easy. It is a great achievement, and no great achievement is easy. It necessitates a continual waiting upon God, never ceasing until all fear, doubt, and uncertainty are overcome, and a sense of awareness is reached, in which one knows intuitively, through direct soul-knowing, that “All is well, both now and a million years hence.” Sometimes Muller prayed all night in order to reach this sense of certainty. The seeming lack from which his work was apparently suffering, at the time, impressed itself upon his soul and made him anxious. He was no god or superman, but one full of weaknesses like we ourselves are. He had his times of doubt and fear, but he overcame them all through prayer, through waiting upon God until he *KNEW* once again that “all is well,” and always is, because God can never fail. As soon as we clearly realize, in our extremity, this supreme truth, we become centralized in Truth: we become anchored in the Unchanging and Eternal: we become established in the Divine order.

There are, so to speak, two kinds of prayer. There is the mental work that never gets beyond the Astral. While it would appear that things have to form in the Astral before they appear on the Material Plane, yet such prayer to the Astral is really no prayer at all. Astral forces can be controlled by strong willing, by strong thought and the use of visualizing and



such like powers; but, whatever is brought forth that is not in harmony with the Spirit must perish. Also, although it may appear to be good, yet it is not good, really, but more often a curse. "Every plant that My Heavenly Father hath not planted he rooteth up," said Jesus. All that is not of the Will of God is out of accord with the true Harmony or Divine order. Nothing that is not in harmony with the Divine order is of any use to man—it does but increase and prolong his suffering.

When, however, we approach the Spiritual and Eternal we can only pray that the Will of the Highest may be done. The prayer of self-will seeks only for a smaller good—what the finite mind thinks is good—but the prayer to the Eternal and Highest is for the larger good—*i. e.*, that which is in harmony with the Will and Purpose of the Highest Heaven.

We are invited and even commanded to pray, but it is in order that we may receive our highest good. By praying that the Highest Good may be done, we reach the Highest Power — Infinite Wisdom and Love—and thus receive the highest good. This highest good is the *only* good, and the only thing that can satisfy us, make us happy and fill us with joy, permanently and eternally.

The same law applies to prayer for others. George Muller had to pray for his Orphanages, but he prayed only that the Will of God should be done. By this I do not mean that he did not pray for specific things, because this is precisely what he did do. It is said that he prayed about everything, even the smallest and most trivial, but always that what was done should be done in God's way—the only perfect, complete and harmonious way. If we do not pray, we cannot expect to receive. If, however, we pray in our own self-will we receive that which

is not harmonious, and which because it is not for our good has to come to naught or be "rooted up." But, if we pray according to the Will of the Highest, then if we do not receive exactly that for which we pray, we receive something far better.

Life wants to give us the best, but we must make application for it, we must work for it in the Unseen. We have to make contact with the Source of all Good, in order that good may manifest. We need also to pray continually in order that our faith may be maintained, refreshed and renewed; for nothing can be achieved without faith. Prayer is not, really, an asking for things and having them given to us, but a seeking for, and reaching after, God, until we find Him, realizing that all is well, and that we have entered into liberty. Our life is perfect as it is imaged in the Mind of God; and prayer, through bringing our mind into harmony with the Divine intention, brings the inherent perfection into manifestation. We do not have to alter God by our prayers; we do not have to change His will or make Him change His mind towards us, but only become changed ourselves, in order to be made at-one, or brought in tune with the good that God has prepared for us.

Prayer, then, not only maintains and sustains our faith, it also brings us into contact with the One Living Source of all things, thus making all things possible.

We have not only to make ventures in faith, to set out upon adventures on the sea of life, but we have to maintain that faith by means of prayer, which at times may be a mere hanging upon God in utter helplessness and abandon. It is only by prayer and communion with God that we can ever be brought victoriously through the tests of the new



life to liberation. When we test God, God puts us through tests which would overwhelm us, but for our faith—faith which is sustained and maintained only by persistent and persevering prayer and communion with God. Such prayer is not a mere asking for things, but is a seeking for God until He is found, and we know that all is well in reality.

## PART II.—CHAPTER V.

## PRINCIPLE IV.

## "NEVER APPEALING FOR HELP."

4th. *Never to rely on man (arm of flesh) nor make appeals to the public.* This, of course, is the sequel or natural outcome of principle No. 1. If God is the sole source of temporal supply, then it is obvious that the only sensible, logical and reasonable thing to do is to trust the Invisible Creative Power entirely, and not man. This, of course, does not mean that we have to cease work, but that we work from a different motive, and with a different object. We work in order to serve, and not in order to get money, even though we may be paid, and paid liberally, for what we do, either directly or indirectly. The very fact that we work not for gain, but in the spirit of service, helps to bring success and abundance to us. We realise that it is due to the working of a higher law. We thus look to God for recompense, and He never fails, because He is bound by His own unfailing principle and law.

If we attempt to put our life on a spiritual basis, and to live by faith, dependent upon God, we are soon tempted to trust, just a little, in man. The temptation is very subtle. The situation in which we find ourselves is such that to adopt worldly



methods seems to be the only thing we can do. God, seemingly, does not care, for He sends no apparent deliverance. On the other hand we know that if we adopt the methods of the world we will obtain instant assistance. The temptation is both severe and subtle, yet if we give in we spoil everything, while if we refuse to do so, thus putting God to the final test, in which we venture all, even our very soul, God must respond. George Muller was often tempted in this way, but he never flinched nor wavered. If he had done so, his great purpose would have been broken, for his ambition was to provide an object-lesson in faith, and not merely to conduct an Orphanage.

But while it is true that George Muller trusted solely in God, refusing to make appeals to man, he however rightly let it be known that his work depended (under God) upon the free-will gifts of those who professed to be followers of Jesus Christ. When he refused to take a salary as pastor he put up a box in his church or chapel in which the people to whom he ministered might put their gifts. Not only did he let them know that they should do this, but he preached sermons on the subject, shewing the people that it was indeed their privilege to support the Lord's work in this way. The putting up of this box was in itself an act of faith, and a setting aside of worldly and human methods in order to adopt a more spiritual one. It was a method that owing to its dependence upon the spontaneity of the Spirit alive in the children of the Kingdom, was more in accord with the Mind of Christ. Previously, collections had been taken from pew to pew. Muller objected to this, on the ground that it might shame poor people into giving more than they could afford or desired to give, while the rich might be tempted

to give much in order to be seen of men. Thus the abolition of collections was a great act of faith on George Muller's part. It is well known that the handing round of open plates brings in more money than is obtained through the use of bags. In the former, people nearby can see what one is putting into it; but, when the latter are used, they cannot. A box put on the wall would naturally bring far less than either, for some would forget about it, while others, in the manner of Nelson who put his telescope to his blind eye, would affect not to notice it. First, then, Muller refused his salary, to do which was a great act of faith; and after that he did away with collections, which was another, and even greater, venture in faith.

The point that I desire to make is, that while Muller refused a salary and abolished collections, thus cutting off almost entirely his only channel of supply for his daily needs, he yet let people know that he was depending (under God) upon free-will offerings, emphasising that it was their duty and privilege to give to the utmost of their ability and resources. He let them know that it was as much their duty and privilege to make ventures in faith through the medium of giving, as it was his to make ventures through refusing all money that might be got by compulsion, or suggestion in the manner referred to. He felt that money that was scraped together by persuasion and effort, or through the compulsion of collections, was not according to the mind of God, and that it was not in harmony with the ways of the Spirit. Such methods were worldly and human methods. He desired to put financial matters on a Heavenly basis, every piece of money being a love gift, an offering to the Lord. The way people give (according to their means) shews to what extent the



Spirit of Christ has become alive in them. The way they give shews to what extent they are willing to make ventures in faith; without which no real progress in things spiritual is possible.

Muller went even farther, for he taught that giving to the Lord was a source of prosperity. He did not mean that giving should be done in order to produce prosperous conditions. The giving should be done in a spirit of love and gratitude, with, of course, no ulterior motive at all. The eye must be single, the motive pure, that is, perfectly sincere. If, however, we give freely, so freely, indeed, that we have ourselves to trust God for the future because of it, then we are greatly blessed. And this state of blessedness clings to one, even after many years. Some people (but very rarely, I admit), complain that they have tithed or given to the Lord, and no good has come of it; that is, they have not become prosperous. The nature of their complaint shews that they have not given in love, or in a spirit of abandon, but have merely made payments in order to get them back with interest. This is duplicity, or casuistry, and is certainly not acting with a single eye and pure or sincere motive.

George Muller taught very plainly that giving should be free and liberal to an extent that most people will view with astonishment. He says: "The child of God must be willing to be a channel through which God's bounties flow, both with regard to temporal and spiritual things. This channel is narrow and shallow at first, it may be; yet there is room for some of the waters of God's bounty to pass through. And if we cheerfully yield ourselves as channels, for this purpose, then the channel becomes wider and deeper, and the waters of the bounty of God can pass through more abundantly. Without a figure it

is thus: At first we may be only instrumental in communicating (giving or passing on) £5, or £10, or £20, or £50, or £100, or £200 per year, but afterwards double as much; and if we are still more faithful in our stewardship, after a year or two, four times as much; afterwards perhaps eight times as much; at last perhaps twenty times or fifty times as much. We cannot limit the extent to which God may use us as instruments in communicating blessing, both temporal and spiritual, if we are willing to yield ourselves as instruments to the living God, and are content to be *only instruments, and to give Him all the glory*. But with regard to temporal things, it will be thus, that if indeed we walk according to the mind of God in these things, whilst more and more we become instruments of blessing to others, we shall not seek to enrich ourselves, but be content when the last day of another year finds us still in the body, to possess no more than on the last day of the previous year, or even considerably less, whilst we have been, however, in the course of the year, the instruments of communicating largely to others, through the means with which the Lord had entrusted us."

"As to my own soul, by the grace of God it would be a burden to me to find, that, however much my income in the course of a year might have been, I was increasing in earthly possession, for it would be a plain proof to me that I had not been acting as a *steward* for God, and had not been yielding myself as a channel for the waters of God's bounty to pass through. I also cannot but bear my testimony here, that in whatever feeble measure God has enabled me to act according to these truths for the last forty-five years, I have found it to be profitable, most profitable to my own soul; and as to temporal things, I never was a loser in doing so, but I have most



abundantly found the truth in 2 Cor. ix, 6, and Luke vi, 38, and Prov. xi, 24, 25, verified in my own experience."

In this way, Muller educated the people up to giving, and in doing so helped them to make ventures in faith and thus to make progress in the spiritual life. Through this teaching he also brought freedom and prosperity to many thousands of lives. Indeed, blessing resulted in all directions, because that which he practised himself and taught others to practise could only bring blessing, for it was in accordance with the mind and will of God. This brings us to the next principle which Muller most rigidly observed.

## PART II.—CHAPTER VI.

### PRINCIPLE V.

#### "AVOIDING DEBT."

5th. *On no account, nor at any time, did George Muller get into debt, either personally or for his work.* If he had not the money to buy a thing he refused to have it. He never had any debt on his Orphanage buildings. He always waited until he had the money before he started building. He never borrowed money, never had credit, and, in consequence, had not worries or financial cares. He not only saved the Orphanages a large amount of money which otherwise would have been paid away in interest, but through so acting he conducted his work according to the mind of God. It is obvious that if God wants us to have a thing, He will supply the money for it. This is the corresponding truth to that which we have already stated, that, if we are wise channels through which God's bounty can flow for His work's sake, then God causes His bounty to flow through us, just as long as we keep the channel pure and unobstructed.

This principle proved by George Muller in his life and work is equally true for us in our life and work. It applies exactly in the same way, although our circumstances are different. *We should never run into debt.* If we really need a thing the money will



be forthcoming at the right time. George Muller and his wife were prepared to starve rather than buy anything for which they could not pay, and in this they were very wise. Muller thus adopted the victorious attitude. Without knowing it he maintained a very positive outlook, and, because of this, won through every time. To have obtained things on credit would have indicated a weakening of purpose, a reliance upon the help of man, and a negative state of mind and will. George Muller was nothing if not positive; that is, he was positive in all his actions. He knew the principles governing success in all walks of life, and resolutely acted according to them. Through so doing he was victorious all along the line. His life was a succession of triumphs, and this because he always adopted and maintained the positive and victorious attitude. We may be very far from being as strong or great in character as George Muller, mere pigmies indeed compared with a giant, but the principles are applicable now, just as they were in his time, and by following them in our much smaller way we may pass from victory to victory and from strength to strength.

People who are in debt, have sometimes written asking me to make an appeal for them. But if I had done so this would have made things worse for them. Their position was due to the fact that they did not adopt a positive attitude towards life. It was through their negative attitude that they allowed themselves to become involved in debt, and to make an appeal would have increased their dependence upon others and their negativeness to such an extent that they would have attracted misfortune all their days.

The positive and victorious attitude keeps adversity away, while a negative attitude attracts it. It

will be seen at once that if a man allows himself to get into debt he does not act in a positive but in a negative way. He adopts a weak and dependent attitude, instead of the "do or die" attitude. It is because of this that so few who borrow ever can pay back. The very act of borrowing increases their weak and negative attitude of mind, so that other adversities are attracted, and troubles are increased instead of lessened.

Apart from ill-health the principal troubles of the lives of many are caused through running into debt. Yet, if they were to adopt the positive outlook, declaring that they would starve rather than have anything they could not pay for, they would enter into liberty. "The happiest place to live in," says some wise individual, "is just inside your income."

In imagination I can hear many readers begin to say, in protest: "Yes, that is all very well, but —" and so on. What they want to say is that their circumstances are different, that in their case to keep out of debt is impossible, and that it is all very well for George Muller and H. T. H. to talk, but if they were in the readers' position they would not be able to act up to their principles. Please do not think that I do not appreciate the greatness of these difficulties. They are great, but they do not alter principle or truth. Nothing can appear to be more hopeless than acting according to this principle, when in adversity. It may appear to shut one off entirely from all avenues through which help might come. And all the time others of less principle, or no principle at all, are obtaining help, by means of a well-pitched, pitiful tale. Yet those who stick to principle, refusing to get into debt, or to depend upon other people, thus maintaining the positive and victorious attitude, ultimately come out winners in



the race of life : while those who run into debt and depend upon other people's help, remain just as they were, always in debt, always a mill-stone round other people's necks.

Those who sneer at religion, saying that it is negative, and simply dope for the weak, would be surprised if they were to acquire some knowledge of that which they criticize. If they made practical acquaintance with the living of a life of faith in God they would find that it is the most positive life possible, requiring great daring, courage, perseverance and endurance, and that one who truly practises it becomes a person of the most positive type possible. People say: "how can I become positive?" The answer is, act according to the same principles which George Muller followed. It is not easy, but it is possible.. It is difficult, especially at first, but it becomes a habit in course of time. If we choose always the difficult path or course of action, the one making the greatest demands upon our faith in God, then without any knowledge of Psychology we become very positive, and thus travel towards liberation. We get on top of life, instead of being submerged by its negative ills and difficulties. There is more truth in the saying "there is plenty of room at the top" than is generally understood. A positive faith in a living God leads to ever increasing freedom.

Of course, business cannot be run without credit, but he is a wise man who pays his accounts promptly, on a certain day each month, so that all with whom he deals know that on the same day each month they will receive, without fail, a cheque from him in full settlement, less discount for prompt payment. Some who read this may sigh, wishing that it might be true in their case. Such should remem-

ber that the attitude of mind makes all the difference between debt and freedom. If one is determined not to run into debt, then one adopts a positive attitude. This positive attitude reflects itself in every action, so that prosperity is attracted in a hundred subtle ways. The one who resolves to be free and independent, and to have nothing for which he cannot pay, adopts the resolute, strong, victorious attitude that paves the way to success.



PART II.—CHAPTER VII.

PRINCIPLE VI.

“NEVER MAKING KNOWN HIS NEED.”

WE now come naturally to the next principle or rule of life, by which George Muller lived inflexibly, which is:—

6th. *Never, on any account, to allow it to be known that circumstances are straitened, if such should be the case.* Here again Muller adopts and maintains the strong, positive attitude and outlook, and pursues the bold and courageous course of action. Not only would he never publish his temporary need, nor ask for help in his embarrassment, but everyone in the Homes was bound to secrecy and silence, no one being allowed to breathe a word about the passing stringency. He even went beyond this, for during such times when visitors asked if he had special need, or if they were in monetary straits, such questions being made with a view to helping the Homes because of their need, Muller would never admit that the work was in difficulties. He would say that their resources were ample, or words to that effect. Doubtless it was at first a great temptation to be asked such questions at such times, when all supply seemed to be dried up, and there was (humanly speaking) no prospect of deliverance.

“NEVER MAKING KNOWN HIS NEED.” 127

Subsequent events, however, *always* proved that the positive attitude of entire reliance upon God was, and ever is, the victorious and successful one. If George Muller had weakened at such a moment and had admitted his apparent need (for it was only apparent, each time deliverance being actually on the way), he would have been unfaithful to God, he would have become negative in character and thought, and his beloved work would have been irreparably damaged.

George Muller met these experiences in a fine spirit. Never for a moment would he admit that God had let him down. Nor would he let God down. Though there might seem no way out, yet he would not, even by a hint, let other people know of his difficulties. He had determined to live by faith; and his mission was to provide the world with an object-lesson in faith. He would go forward at all costs; do or die, win or lose, neck or nothing, onward he was determined to go. He put his whole trust in God, and it was God's business to deliver him.

This is the lesson that we all have to learn, those of us who are trying to live the life of faith, to cast ourselves and our all upon God, and then never to give way, or weaken, or look back. When we “cast our burden on the Lord” it becomes His, and in honour He will and must bear it. Because of His honour He can never prove unfaithful. He bids us prove Him. “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, said the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

The secret of abundant and constant supply is to



give freely, to trust completely and to receive fully. This Divine system brings freedom, liberty and blessing into the life. It is the antithesis of the way of the world, which is to get and to hold all you can, and to trust in money and possessions instead of in God.

However, this is by the way, the point that I want to emphasize is that George Muller would never on any account allow outsiders to know of the difficult times of testing through which he had to pass. He let the world know that while he would not ask for a sou, yet both he and his work were supported by voluntary offerings; but, he would never allow it to be known that they were in apparent want and difficulty, no matter how bad things might appear to be. To let it be known that the work was supported voluntarily, and that people might give to it, if they felt so inclined, was to adopt a strong, positive line of action. On the other hand, to ask for support, to allow the public to know that he or his work stood in need, would have been to adopt a weak and negative line of action. The reason why those who allow themselves or their work to get into debt, and who also plead poverty, and pitch a tale of woe, saying that their work must close down if something is not done, etc., the reason why they are always in difficulties, and can never become clear of debt and trouble, but rather get deeper and deeper into the mire, is that they follow a negative and weak line of action. George Muller had his difficulties, but he won through them to ever-increasing liberty, freedom, and success. Those who depend upon man are always at the mercy of man's caprice and the fluctuations of material conditions. But George Muller depended upon God, and thus became established in unchanging Reality. The dif-

ficult times through which he passed were merely the tests of his apprenticeship. When want and failure stared him in the face, abundance was always already on the way.

Through many searching experiences George Muller became increasingly sure of God. Experience after experience proved to him that if he adopted and maintained the positive attitude — the attitude of entire dependence upon God, instead of seeking the help of man—God and the Invisible always responded. In the Hidden and Unseen was illimitable abundance waiting to flow to him and his work in ever-increasing volume, according to his need and the corresponding demands that he made upon God's bounty. The Abundance of God is like a mighty ocean, so vast we cannot possibly exhaust it or cause a shortage for others. We can go to this Inexhaustible Ocean with a small cup and bring away only that small cup full of bounty and blessing. Or, if we have faith enough, we can take a bucket and bring away a bucketful. It makes no difference to the Ocean. Nor does it matter how often we go with our cup or bucket; abundance is always there, and always will be, for it is inexhaustible; it has its rise in the heart and mind of God.



PART II.—CHAPTER VIII.

PRINCIPLE VII.

“ALWAYS GOING FORWARD TO NEW ENTERPRISE.”

THE next rule of life which George Muller observed is:—

7th. *Always to go forward to fresh adventures, launching out more courageously, experimentally, and enterprisingly into the deep.* George Muller never stood still: he never rested on his oars: he was for ever engaging in fresh ventures of faith. He was wise, in that he started in a small way, and then both he and his work grew together, increasing in stature and magnitude year by year. He was wise, because the life of faith is like the growth of a plant. “First the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear.” We have to begin with little things, and when we have proved God in these small experiences, and God has proved us, we are ready to launch out into larger ventures of faith. Thus our progress is harmonious and according to Divine order. We are not rushed into posts or responsibilities for which we are not prepared, but when *we* are ripe, the opportunity of larger and more important service comes to us, quite naturally and harmoniously.

George Muller never allowed himself to get into a rut. He knew that it would be fatal for him to

“NEW ENTERPRISE.”

do so, because, if he did, his moral fibre would weaken and his faith decay. No progression is retrogression, is a wise saying amongst business men. It is equally wise and true when applied to the spiritual life, the life of faith. If we do not make fresh excursions into the unknown our faith ceases to be exercised, becoming weakened in consequence. If an athlete does not regularly exercise his muscles, and if he does not try to excel and to beat his past performances, he becomes weaker and softer, and thus deteriorates. The would-be man of faith is in the same position; he *must* go forward; he *must* make greater and more daring experiments; he *must* widen his horizons; he *must* for ever push back the boundaries of his mind.

The man of faith must burn his boats behind him every day of his life. Indeed, he needs no boats, because like Peter he walks on the sea of experience upheld by invisible forces, which support him only so long as he puts his entire trust in the Power of the Living God.

Life is progressive. Everything moves forward. No matter what it is in which we may be engaged, we must go forward. The stream that dashes gaily on its way to the sea is bright and clear and pure. Not so the stagnant pool, that is filled with impurity and is unpleasant both to sight and sense of smell.

Life is movement; life is action; life is progression; life is growth. We must ever move forward; we must ever expand.

George Muller, knowing all this, modelled his life accordingly. First he started his Orphanage with one house and a sum of £1,000, both brought to him through prayer. Then he moved to Ashley Downs, bought land and erected one building, everything being paid for “on the nail.” Afterwards



he continued to add to the buildings, thus increasing the number of children under his care. Each addition was a tremendous venture in faith. Not only did it mean the getting together of vast sums of money for the building of the Homes and the equipping of them, but it also necessitated a very great increase of yearly income. Muller had to venture by faith upon uncharted seas. No doubt the thought came to him that it might be possible for his work to be supported by voluntary gifts, *up to a point*, and yet for a larger effort to fail. George Muller had no means of disproving this. He had no figures or experience to which he could go for information. All that he could do was to go forward in faith, relying upon God both for support and for guidance. This is an important point, as those who have had any experience at all, know. It is useless to rely upon God for support if we are doing the wrong thing. Many of us, alas! want to go our own way, or think that we know the best way, and that our faith and our prayers can compel God to bless and support our enterprise. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." There is only one *right* road along which we can go, and it is only the Wisdom of Omniscience that can show us it and lead us along it. George Muller succeeded because of his faith, but it was because he had faith enough in God to allow God to lead him.

One who exercises true faith always "trusts the Current which knows the way." It is a false sort of faith when a man wants to guide himself, and then to compel God and the Invisible forces to bring him success. We have indeed no faith at all—no *true* faith, if we are not willing to allow God to "take the helm" of our life, and of our home, our work, our business. One who has not yet learnt to pray

from his heart, "Lead Thou me on," has not yet started to live the life of faith. It is after we have made a practice of praying and surrendering in the spirit of these words of Newman that the great adventure begins. For faith is a great adventure.

Some who have no knowledge of the subject, say that to surrender to the will and leading of God is an act of weakness. They should try it and see for themselves. They would then find that they had taken on "a man's job," and that there is no life that calls for so much courage and faith as that which seeks to be led by the Spirit according to the will of God. Those who think that surrendering to the guidance of the Spirit and Will of God is weakening should study the portrait of George Muller to be found in Dr. Pierson's Biography. Never have I seen a stronger face, nor one more inflexible, or so calm in the repose of its strength. Whoever looks at it must admit that it is the very embodiment of strength and power.

No, to live a life of faith and to allow oneself to be led by the Spirit, so that all that one does is according to the will of God, is not easy; but George Muller proved that it could be done. He set out to provide an object-lesson in faith to weaker people, and in doing so there came to him, voluntarily, nearly a million and a half pounds sterling; but, actually, his life was just as much a demonstration of Divine guidance as it was one of faith. Muller had the faith to trust God for guidance as well as to supply his needs. He used to pray, and to keep on praying, and then had the grace and patience to wait for signs and guiding tokens. He did not listen to voices. I do not remember ever reading that George Muller ever heard voices. His example in this respect is worth the earnest attention of modern



people. Voices, when heard, are generally psychic or astral voices, and if obeyed cannot lead us in the path that is the only true and right one for us. This is because our true path is not known on astral or psychic planes, but only to the mind of God, and on the Heavenly planes. If, therefore, we desire to be led in the only true and right path (and therefore the only truly successful path), we must look direct to God for guidance.

It is true enough that one can be grievously misled by astral voices. It is however also true that if we look to God for guidance, we are most assuredly led by the Spirit. We do not hear voices; we do not hear, literally, "this is the way, walk ye in it," but we may realise, in our affairs, the guiding hand of God.

George Muller prayed, and continued to pray, but he was content to wait until things worked themselves out. He did not attempt to do quixotic things, because of hearing voices, but he used his common sense and waited until the time was ripe for him to go forward. We find that the path that is repeatedly blocked is not the right one for us, but that the right path opens for us just at the right time; that difficulties are removed in a harmonious fashion; and that all things dovetail together in what, to our finite mind, is nothing less than a wonderful manner.

All through his life Muller continued to make ventures in faith. He was not content with proving God in small things, but he was for ever testing Him in greater matters. It would have been reasonable and natural for him to have reduced his activities as he became older. One would expect, that at 70 years of age, having reached the so-called appointed limit of man's life in the body, he would have considered the question of retiring from a life so strenuous as

his. For nearly 50 years he had the responsibilities of the great work of the Orphanages, preaching and public speaking, the carrying on of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution. Was he satisfied with all this? Most people would have been more than satisfied, but not so George Muller. Having exhausted his field of service, and having established his great Orphanage enterprise, with his son-in-law at the head, he looked round for further fields to conquer. Having served God and man to the utmost of his ability, and finding the way opening for further service, he willingly and eagerly embarked at the age of 70 on a world preaching tour.

No one who was not led by the Spirit, would ever have attempted such a task. All human wisdom and judgment were against such an undertaking. Yet God had his plans concerning George Muller, and he felt it was a privilege to fall in with them. All his life he had been a delicate and physically weak man—a great soul in a frail body—and he had just managed to carry on, and to accomplish his work, with very little, as regards physical strength, in hand. Yet, at the age of 70, this frail and delicate man, without hesitation accepted the call to minister to the whole world. Most people, probably, do not know what a strain a lecturing or preaching tour is on the strength and vitality of the one who engages in it. It breaks down the strongest. It was his lecturing and reading tours in the United States that killed Charles Dickens. Obviously George Muller could never have stood the strain of his world preaching tour, in his own strength—he was given special strength for the purpose.

George Muller, always eager and willing to make larger and increasing ventures in faith, embraced this opportunity of larger and wider service. It was



because of his faith that he was brought victoriously through this experience. And what an experience! This world tour, or, rather, many tours to different parts of the world, including Europe, Canada, the U.S.A., Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, Ceylon, and India, in addition to Great Britain, extended over a period of seventeen years, from the 70th year of his life to the 87th. Muller continued his activities at Bristol, dying in harness, at the age of 93.

## PART II.—CHAPTER IX.

## PRINCIPLE VIII.

## “SEEKING NOT HIS OWN.”

WE now arrive at the next rule or principle which George Muller observed all through his life:—

8th. *To give all his substance to the Lord, except what was necessary for his modest and frugal mode of life.* There are those who do not see eye to eye with Muller in his austere and frugal mode of living. William Quarrier, the great Scottish Philanthropist, did not. He conducted his Orphan Homes on very different lines from those adopted by George Muller. The Bristol Orphanages were plain, severe, austere and lacking in beauty. The rooms had bare board floors, and there were no comforts, but only absolute necessities. Muller was a utilitarian. Use, not ornament or refinement, was his motto. He was consistent, in that he and his wife lived in the same austere manner. He had two good reasons for this. One was that it was good discipline for the orphans, and a suitable preparation for their future station in life, for most of them would have to “rough it” more or less all their lives. The other reason was that, as the money subscribed to the work was often in the form of gifts from the very poor, the result of self-denial and considerable sacrifice, it would not be



seemly to spend it on luxury, or things that were not altogether necessary. Both are good reasons, but there is a reply to both of them.

Quarrier on the contrary believed in placing his orphans in surroundings as pleasing as possible. His orphanage was composed of very beautiful houses, standing in lovely grounds. He also had a good reason for so doing. His work reflected his mind, which was of a less austere nature than that of George Muller.

Few people, now-a-days, would care to adopt such a plain and frugal mode of life as that of George Muller. But all can join with him in giving to the Lord's work, not in order to become prosperous (although this if done with freedom and sincerity does lead to prosperity), but in order to help the good work, and as an act of gratitude and love. Most of the good agencies at the present day are palliative only. They endeavour to deal with and ameliorate evils that already exist. The work of the Lord is the changing and remaking of men, and the consequent transformation of their lives. Hospitals, Prisons, Reformatories, Penitentiaries, and Asylums and workhouses would all become unnecessary if people were brought into a knowledge of Truth. Therefore, the one most essential thing is to spread the knowledge of Truth, thus preventing evil, instead of trying to cure it when it has appeared.

Prevention is better than cure. George Muller gave all his life and nearly all his income to a work which, to a large extent, was preventive. Instead of the orphan children possibly becoming either criminals or a charge on the rates, they were taken into the friendly shelter of the Orphan Homes, and there fed, clothed, educated, and given a start in life. We moderns have a work to-day that is even more pre-

ventive; for we know that poverty, sickness, disorder and other evils are due very largely to wrong thought and a negative attitude of mind. We know, to-day, something of the power of the imagination; that it is creative, and that the outward life is largely a reflection of the nature of our thought. We know, to-day, that life is consciousness, and that what we exclude from our consciousness fails to appear in our life; but that what we allow to enter our consciousness may appear in our life. So that, one who lives in the consciousness of good, and whose imagination dwells on good, finds that good manifests in his life. By good I mean all that is good—health, harmony, love, beauty, preservation from evil and disaster, order, sufficiency, freedom from care, etc.

Life becomes a harmonious progression, instead of a sort of long-drawn-out dog-fight, as it unfortunately is, in many cases. One who seeks God and depends upon God: who trains his imagination to correspond with the Divine imagination: who enters into the Consciousness of good, which is a Divine state, lives in a condition of peace and harmony. He is *in* the world, yet not of it: he is guided and sustained, and all his needs supplied by higher laws than those of the material plane and those made by man.

These things, together with others of a more spiritual and heavenly character, would transform the life of man, if he only knew of them and were to act on them. It is because of this that most of those who have entered Truth are anxious to extend the teaching, so that it may be a blessing in other lives.

Religious teaching in the past has dealt mainly with preparing man for the next world. This is of course of the utmost importance, but we should not allow it to blind us to the fact that there is a Power



that can make this life perfect also. We should not ignore the fact that it is left to us either to use or mis-use our mind and imagination. If we use them rightly, so that we live in a consciousness of wholeness and good, then wholeness and good manifest in our life. We are lifted above the laws and forces which, on the material plane, operate inimically to our well-being. Forces of evil have power only on their own plane: they can affect us only through our own evil, or thought and receptiveness to evil. We become immune to the extent that we maintain a positive attitude to all but God and the Divine order. We can afford to be receptive only towards God and His Good and Perfection, Order and Harmony. Also we cannot afford to allow our imagination (the God-given creative power of mind) to run riot. We need to train it to work along Heavenly lines, thus creating only those things that are beautiful, harmonious and true.

George Muller rendered inestimable service in that he taught that God is a living God, One who helps us in this life as well as the next. He rendered inestimable service also in teaching that the same God that provided for the Orphanages, will also provide a business man with capital, or help an ordinary individual to pay his rent, keep out of debt, and feed and clothe his children. He taught and also proved in his life, that there is a higher law of supply, that the Infinite is our Source, and not merely our business or even our work. Because he brought God into the practical affairs of life he was the fore-runner of a new and better way of life, one of abundance and freedom, in which man trusts God and not man for all his temporal supplies. To-day we are developing the same idea, applying it also to health, and harmony in all the affairs of life.

But to return to our subject. George Muller was austere and frugal in his mode of life, from choice, and on principle. Most of his large income was given away, chiefly to the orphans. He always put the work first, and himself last; which, by the way, is the secret of success in all enterprises and business. When, however, he lectured and preached all over the world, he stayed at hotels instead of accepting the hospitality that was freely offered him. He did so, because he put the work first. If he had accepted the hospitality he would have had a happy social time, doubtless, but very little opportunity to engage in prayer, study, and to be by himself. When one is a guest one has to accommodate oneself to the plans and wishes of one's host and hostess. Also those who give the hospitality, only too often, lionize their guest, and, in the kindness of their heart, invite other people to meet him. All this social life prevents a preacher or lecturer from having that amount of time to himself that is vitally necessary for the successful carrying out of his mission. George Muller found this to be the case, so he stayed at hotels instead. This entailed a very greatly increased expense, but all his needs were met. As soon as the need arose, the necessary money was forthcoming. The same thing would have happened if George Muller had furnished his Orphanages better, and had provided the children with more pleasing surroundings. Also, if he had lived in a less frugal and austere style, in simple comfort and refinement, he would have had all his needs met, and he would have been able to give away as much or even more, because the supply coming to him would have been greater.

It has been my own experience that when the need is increased the supply becomes greater. When



we give more freely we push back the boundaries of our mind, we step beyond the limitations of our usual consciousness, we rely more implicitly upon God, so that it is possible for greater abundance to enter our life and circumstances. Whereas, if we restrict our giving, we also restrict our mind, we increase its limitations, and lessen our faith and dependence upon God; so that it is increasingly difficult for supply to flow to us and through us. If, however, we are a free and open channel for Divine provision to flow through us to others, then abundance flows to us, and the freer we become the more freely does God's bounty come. George Muller did not teach this in order that people might be persuaded to give to his Orphanages, but that those who took heed to his words might enter into financial freedom. It is the experience of those who tithe on small incomes, that even though their income does not increase, yet, in some mysterious way, they enjoy increasing financial freedom. They are poor yet they are rich. Their needs are met, their wants are supplied, and the vexations and cares which blight other lives do not affect them.

George Muller taught that just as his work was not his but the Lord's, so also if we are His then all that we have belongs to the Lord. We are not our own, we are bought with a price. We work for God, not for man; we work in a spirit of service and not for what we can get out of it, and all that we have belongs to the Lord. Because of this the silver and the gold are the Lord's, and all things that we possess. Therefore we freely give to the Lord's work. We merely give back to life part of that which life has given to us. When we realize and acknowledge that our business or our income, or our earn-

ings are the Lord's, we no longer have any difficulty in giving freely. We lose the "me and mine" spirit: we are no longer acquisitive: we enter into liberty. "Freely ye have received, freely give."



PART II.—CHAPTER X.

PRINCIPLE IX.

“ FERVENT IN SPIRIT, SERVING THE LORD.”

WE now come to the last principle or rule which George Muller observed and followed all through his life, and it is this:—

9th. *Always, and at all times, to render service.* George Muller reversed the prevalent idea of working for a living, and for what one could get out of it, and of not working if it were not profitable to do so. His principle was to serve the Lord (life and humanity) and to leave the matter of supply to the Lord, instead of exacting so much pay for so much work. The living of one's life is raised unto a higher level through working according to such a principle. One who so lives is also lifted above the inimical forces which are generated by man's selfish competition. This is entirely apart from religious profession. Those who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ, and who yet work in the same spirit and with the same motive as the ordinary man of the world, are subject to the same inimical forces as he. The fact that they profess to be followers of the Nazarene, or are believers in the dogmas of Christianity, does not prevent them from participating in the evils generated in a world of strife and covetousness. The

“ SERVING THE LORD.”

powers exerted over their victims by money, and big business, and heartless, ruthless competition, affect all who are not on that higher plane, through working in obedience to the spiritual law, and according to its principles.

But those who live and work in this more blessed way are assuredly lifted above the forces which otherwise might destroy them; for in the scramble for wealth and even a living, the weakest go to the wall. They are upheld and delivered in this manner, in spite of the fact that they may make no religious profession. As Jesus said: we have to be doers of the word and not hearers only. “Not everyone that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.” The important point is that we have to possess the right motive, think the right thought, maintain the right mental attitude, and live according to Divine principles, and in harmony with the Divine laws. If we do this then we are greatly blessed, and all things will come our way, harmoniously and without strife.

George Muller, although he did not work for a living, but ever in the spirit of service, was never idle. His was an exceedingly busy, active, and fruitful life, from the time when he became converted in his early manhood, unto his death, at the ripe age of 93.

To-day, we hear such slogans as “success through service,” and “service before profits.” Those who act up to them are simply following in the footsteps of George Muller. They are applying the same principle to business that guided him in all his work. Always first things first; always serving. The reward could look after itself.

If we examine the truly great, outstanding and



permanent successes of the present day we find that they are all based on service. When we serve and when we give, we open ourselves to receive life's richest blessings, its greatest prizes, and its most enduring success. The man who works for self, or who thinks that his business is being run for his personal benefit, or who expects other people to help him, can never become a success. His very attitude towards life, keeps away all possibilities of such a thing; it dams up the channel through which good and abundance can flow.

The same applies to those who call themselves Christian yet stoop to all the mean tricks of the world. If a man takes advantage of a brother by beating him down below a fair and remunerative price, how can he be blest and prospered? There are those who try to buy everything they possibly can below its true market value. They are ready to take advantage of another's loss and difficulty in order to secure for themselves a bargain. They think that by so doing they can secure some advantage for themselves. But this is not the case. They commit a crime, similar to pocket-picking and burglary, and because of this they suffer from the evils which wickedness brings, for evil comes to them through their own evil. Through acting evilly, they lay themselves open to evil happenings. Actually, it is much better to pay too high a price than too low a one; what we have to make sure of is that we pay enough. If we find that we are being charged too little we should insist upon paying more.

Again there are those who call themselves Christian who endeavour to enrich themselves at the expense of their brothers by means of Stock and Share investment and speculation. Either they seek a higher rate of interest than is right and just, or they

defraud others by selling their shares just before their value falls. Passing the loss on to others in this way is not spoken of as thieving or robbery, but as good business! It does not make any difference by what name it may be called, it is out of harmony with Life and with the Law of Life, and, therefore, while it may bring an apparent temporary gain, it yet brings no blessing with it, but rather the reverse; if not financial, then in other ways.

Again, there are those who think that the work which they are conducting ought to be "helped"; and because it is not helped they are disappointed and dissatisfied. Their outlook is wrong. What they should endeavour to do is to make their work helpful to others, and leave the recompense to the Law and Divine principle. If they were to do this they would be abundantly blest, and all their needs and the necessities of their work would be adequately supplied. Indeed, all that we give to life in a spirit of service is returned to us an hundredfold, even as our Lord said it would be.



## XI.

### CONCLUSION.

*"Beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord."*

IN concluding these studies in the life of George Muller I ought to point out that his achievements depended upon the vitality of his inner spiritual life. He could never have accomplished what he did accomplish, nor have been the blessing that he was to thousands of people, if he had not kept alive, and daily nourished, his own soul. If his own spiritual life had become dead, then his work would have drooped, and his testimony would have lacked power and sincerity; in fact, his life would have become a failure.

I do not mean by this the committing of actual sin, for no one knew better than George Muller that to achieve great things by prayer and through faith is impossible, if sinful thought is indulged in. He was far too wide awake and wise to be taken in in this way. But, like all who are busily engaged in religious and philanthropic work, he was tempted to attend to the needs of others, and to pray for definite things, to the exclusion of the nourishing of his

### CONCLUSION.

149

own soul, and the strengthening of his own inner spiritual life. Wise man that he was, Muller detected this error in his life. He discovered that the very fact that all his spare time was spent in praying for his orphans and the specific needs of the Orphanage and the Scriptural Knowledge Association, was in itself a source of error, which ultimately would ruin both him and the work that he loved. Muller found as others have found also, that it was fatal to allow the activities of his work, even though it was of a religious character, necessitating much prayer and thought and study of the Bible, to interfere with his own devotions and private prayer and meditation. It would naturally be thought that praying for others and for his Institution, and reading the Bible with a view to preparing addresses and sermons for the spiritual benefit of others would have been sufficient. But it was not so with George Muller, and it is certainly not so with us. It is possible to pray and study the Bible on behalf of others, and yet for our own spiritual life to be starved. Muller found that it was absolutely necessary that he should rise early and spend the best hours of the day (before breakfast) in reading, meditating, and praying over the Word of God, simply and solely in order that his own soul should be nourished. He found that, as soon as he started to read and meditate, ideas would come to him suitable for sermons. These had to be rejected, and the Word meditated upon simply and solely for his own soul's benefit. Again, the reading of the Bible would suggest needs of the Orphans which ought to be prayed over. These also had to be rejected, and again the meditation continued solely for the nourishment of his own soul. It may seem strange to most readers, when I state that, at this time, George Muller was literally fighting for the life



of his soul, that his spiritual life was in jeopardy, but such was indeed the case. All who have engaged in spiritual work have had to pass through the same experience, or else become spiritually dead. It is vital that all such should do the same as George Muller, viz., spend the best hours of the day in meditation upon, and prayer over, some portion of the Bible, with the sole purpose of nourishing their own soul.

If this is necessary for one who is engaged in religious work, how much more necessary is it for one who is engaged in secular work and business! It is most important that "the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches" should be prevented from "choking the word, so that it become unfruitful." This can be done only through the setting aside of the best part of the day, before the usual activities and routine begin. For then the mind is fresh, vigorous, and receptive, for meditation upon the Word of God, in prayer and communion, for the special nourishment and benefit of one's own soul.

A good plan is to divide the time at one's disposal into three parts. The first period should be devoted entirely to nourishing one's own soul; the second, to praying for others; while the third may be devoted to praying for one's work and the many problems of life. The last-named may, however, be dealt with at night. If for any reason the time in the early morning is shortened, then the meditation and prayer for the benefit of one's soul must take precedence at all costs.

Some indeed may say that they cannot find time for all this, but George Muller, bearing the tremendous burden of his work, with all its activities and ramifications, demanding from him a hundred

prayers, found that it was vitally necessary that he put it all on one side in order to think only of God and commune with Him to the exclusion of everything else. He not only found it to be vitally necessary, but he also proved that he was able to do it. He discovered two vital things of supreme importance which had he neglected them would have ruined his life. They were these: (1) To read actually the word of God, the Bible, itself, instead of religious books about the Bible. At one time he read religious books to the exclusion of the Bible, but found that his soul was being starved. He therefore realised how desirable it was, if he would keep alive his spiritual life, that he read the Bible direct, and for religious books to take second place. The second vital thing was that to which I have already drawn attention, viz., meditation and prayer in the early hours, these taking first place to the exclusion of everything else, in order that his soul might be nourished and strengthened.

It is equally necessary or even more so in the case of the ordinary individual that he should do the same as George Muller. Many people may say that to do so is impossible. Their life is so full of activities and their duties so many they cannot find time for it. By the end of the day they are too tired to meditate, pray, and read: while in the morning they have to rush off to work, etc. So long as they think in this way will they remain the victims of their circumstances and environment. But if no way appears possible they can make a way. If they would get up early and spend the best and freshest portion of the day in meditating upon God's word, and in personal prayer and praise, they would find that their health would not suffer through the reduction in the hours of sleep. In addition they would find that



their life would become greatly enriched, harmonized and blest. Their character also would be strengthened, and their abilities and working powers increased. They would find that their work would be accomplished with greater ease and with increased efficiency, and that at the end of the day they would be less fatigued.

Let me repeat that the most essential thing of all, as George Muller has pointed out, is that the time set apart for meditation and prayer should be used solely for the feeding of one's own soul. All sorts of ideas will come to one, ideas having reference to the instruction of others and the benefitting of others, and also to the problems of one's own life. These must be put aside and the attention paid solely to the feeding of one's interior life. Upon the aliveness of the soul everything depends—our service, our efficiency, our character, our success, our strength to overcome, our faith, our ability to know Truth, and so on. Without this aliveness of soul we may be very active busybodies, but we can never make of our life a true success; while what we do achieve, ephemeral though it be, can only be accomplished through exhausting effort and depleting strain.

THE END.

*"Nothing is too small a subject for prayer,  
because nothing is too small to be the sub-  
ject of God's care."*