

Select Serial.

"Fred and Maria, and Me."

A STORY OF NEW ENGLAND BAPTIST LIFE.  
CHAPTER 2.

After Deacon Morse had gone, I sat and thought and thought, and at last I got some paper and a pen and ink and I wrote a letter to Fred, and told him not to feel bad about it, but I was pretty well used up for want o' money, and if he could let me have a little I'd take it kindly of him, and if he couldn't he needn't mind, I'd sell the old place and manage somehow. Satan hung round while I was a writin', and says he "Miss Avery, you'll be as forlorn as old Ma'am Hardy if you sell out. You'll have to go out to board, and won't never have nothin' to give away, and never have the minister to tea. And you was born in this house, and so was your father and your grandfather."

"I'm glad you've learnt manners and stopped calling me Aunt Avery," says I. "And if you're hinting about going to law and such things, you may as well go first as last. For I'll sell this house and give it to Fred, sooner than do anything to please you."

With that he sneaked off and I finished my letter. In a few days who should come driving down from New York but Fred Avery. He said he was dreadful sorry about that money, but 'twas all gone, and times harder than ever, but he certainly would pay every cent sooner or later if he had to sell his house and furniture and turn his wife and children into the street.

"I can't sleep nights for thinking of it," says he, "and my wife can't sleep either, and my little children they keep asking Papa, hadn't we better stop going to school, and go and work for our livin', so as to pay Aunt Avery all that money?"

"La! do they now?" says I, "the little dears! You tell 'em Aunt Avery won't touch a cent of it, and to comfort their ma all they can, and tell her never to mind anything the old woman writes again, for she won't have folks kept awake worryin' about her."

So Fred he promised to make all right and pay me up besides, and he gave me money enough to pay my pew rent, and to get along with a few months—law, I didn't need much! and so all began to go on just as it did before, and Deacon Morse and Sam Avery left off worryin' me about things. But I was turning 'em over in my mind unbeknown to them, and one day when there was only a dollar left, I put on my bonnet and went over to 'Squire Jackson's and says I, "Squire Jackson, if you still want to buy the old place, I've concluded to let you have it. I'm gettin' old and I don't want my affections set too strong on things below, and somehow my heart feels kind of sore and as if it wouldn't mind parting even with the old place."

The fact is, though I didn't know it, I'd got sort o' weaned from this world by Satan's botherin' me and saying, "Tain't right for Fred Avery to cheat you so! He ain't a man to be depended on!" For if there was anybody I ever did love 'twas that boy, and I never looked to see him grow up selfish or mean; and his last letter sounded kind o' sharp and out o' patience, as if I was the one that owed the money and not him. 'Squire Jackson didn't wait to be asked twice. He jumped right up and went for lawyer Rogers, and had the papers drawn up, and I signed my name. And the old Avery place wasn't the old Avery place any more. 'Squire Jackson cut down those trees my grandfather was so proud of, and had the house turned upside down, and inside out. I went to board at the widow Dean's and she gave me her best bedroom, and I tried to make it out I was to home. But 'twasn't home after all, and I couldn't have the minister to tea, nor fry doughnuts for them dear children, and the widow Dean's ways wasn't like my ways, and things seemed kind of strange, and I began to feel as if it wasn't me but somebody else, and my head got to spinning round in a way it never did afore. I thought it was the tea, and that the widow Dean didn't make it right, but I didn't like to hurt her feelings by saying that, and at last I said to myself, "The fact is, Aunt Avery, you're an old maid and full of notions, and you've no business sitting here boardin' as if you was a lady; you ought to be doing something as you was brought up

to." But when I happened to speak to the doctor about them queer feelings in my head, he said, "Aunt Avery, a journey would do you more good than all the doctors in the county. You've had a great deal to try you and you've changed your manner of life entirely. It don't agree with you to sit here doing nothing, and you must get up and go off somewhere."

"But whereabouts?" says I. "I never was twenty miles from home in my life, and I'm sure I don't know were to go."

That very day I got a letter from Fred saying he had been sick with fever owing to his anxiety about his business, and especially at the step he had driven me to take by his own want of money. "If I had a few thousand dollars I could take advantage of the state of the market," said he, "and make a speculation that would set me on my feet again, and you with me, Aunt Avery. Then you could buy the dear old place back and live just as you used to live. But alas! this paltry sum is wanting."

"Money wouldn't set them old trees a-growing again," says I to myself, "nor make our old house ever look old again—at least, not in my time. But if it could put Fred on his feet again, why, it's a pity he shouldn't have it. And I've had hard thoughts I ought not to have had, and called him mean and selfish, and that isn't the way the Bible tells us to feel. If I thought I could get to being as quiet and happy as I used to be in the old times, I'd give him every cent I had left, and welcome. But then where should I live, and and who'd take and clothe me, and feed me for nothing. It takes all the widow Dean's grace and nature too to having me to board, even when I pay her every Saturday night, and I s'pose people wasn't made to live together; if they was everybody'd like their tea lukewarm, and not have two opinions on that p'int nor no other."

Just then Sam Avery he came sauntering in, and says he, "Aunt Avery, the doctor says if you don't go off on a journey your head'll split in two, and I'll tell you what, I've got a first rate plan in my head that'll set everything straight in no time. You sit here all day worryin' about Fred and a-pitying him 'cause he can't pay his debts. Now, if you could put him in the way of paying what he owes you, wouldn't it take a load off your mind?"

"Goodness, Sam," says I, "of course it would. But there ain't no way, unless it is to let him have what I got for the farm; and I've a good mind to do that."

"If you do, I'll have you put in the asylum," says Sam. "You don't know nothing about the world and I do, and I want you to promise me that you won't let Fred have that money without consulting me. Do you think your good old father worked and toiled and got his face sunburnt and his hands as hard as two horns, just for Fred Avery! What do you suppose he'd say if he could rise from his grave and see strangers rampaging over the old place, and them trees cut down, and them red and yaller carpets all over the floors your mother used to keep so clean and shining? Why he'd sneak back where he rose from in less than no time."

I got so bewildered hearing him talk, that I didn't know what I was about, and I began think there's two ways of lookin' at things, and may-be I hadn't reflected whether or not my father would have liked what I had done. But I know I'd tried to do as I'd ought, and so I says to Sam:

"Don't talk so, Sam. It makes me sort of shudder to think of my father that's gone to heaven, caring anything about the old place now, and what colour 'Squire Jackson's carpets are, and such things. And if you've got any plan for Fred's good in your head, I wish you'd tell it, for I'm afraid I haven't shown a Christian spirit about him."

"Well," says Sam, "you've got to go a journey, and so have I, for I'm going to New York on business, and you can go along with me and see Fred, and tell him you'll take part of his debt in board. That will relieve his mind and his wife's mind, and be as Christian an act as need be. And then, if after tryin' 'em you don't like their ways, and don't feel to home, you come right back here, and me and my wife will make things agreeable for you. Amanda is a little woman anybody could live with, and if anybody could, you could. If you like your tea hot—"

"I do," says I, "bilin' hot."

"Well, if you like it hot, she does. But then if you change your mind and like it kind of insipid and lukewarm, she'll change hers, and like it insipid. Amanda and I never had no words together, and she's a nice little woman, that's a fact."

"Sam," says I, "you've hit the right nail on the head this time. I'll do what is no more'n Christian, and go to Fred's. Poor man, how glad he'll be, and how glad his wife'll be, and their children too. I wonder I never thought of it before!"

(To be continued.)

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Epitaph on Byron's Dog.

Mr. Editor,—  
If an incident is worth rehearsing at all, it is certainly worth while to do it correctly. It has become so fashionable of late to dress up old anecdotes with new names and dates that even historical facts have been subjected to the same ungenerous treatment. In your issue of Dec. 20 appears the epitaph of "Boatswain," professing to be an inscription from a small marble monument within the precincts of Windsor Castle.

Those of your readers who are familiar with the biography of Lord Byron will remember that "Boatswain" was the poet's pet dog. After the death of this esteemed dog, he was honorably interred within the precincts of Newstead Abby, the poet's home, and a handsome monument placed over him bearing the inscription quoted in your columns. "Of his favorite dog Boatswain," says Moore, "whom he immortalized in verse and by whose side it was once his solemn purpose to be buried, some traits are told indicative not only of intelligence but generosity of spirit, which might well win for him the affections of such a master as Byron." Lake, in his Life of Lord Byron, gives a graphic description of Newstead Abby, in one part of which he remarks: "Through the iron gate which opens into the garden under the arch is seen the dog's tomb; it is on the north side, upon a raised ground, and surrounded by steps. The verses inscribed on one side of the pedestal are well known, but the lines preceding them are not so. They run thus:—

"Near this spot  
Are deposited the remains of one  
Who possessed beauty without vanity,  
Strength without insolence,  
Courage without ferocity  
This praise, which would be unmeaning  
flattery.

If inscribed over human ashes,  
Is but a just tribute to the memory of  
BOATSWAIN, a dog,  
Who was born at Newfoundland, May 1803,  
And died at Newstead, Nov. 18, 1808."

The epitaph is here reproduced at length because that which appeared in your columns is evidently incorrect. It may also be worth while to quote the verses alluded to above, since there is even more truth and point in them than there are in the foregoing epitaph:

When some proud son of man returns to earth,  
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,  
The sculptor's art exhausts the pomps of woe,  
And storied urns record who rests below;  
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,  
Not what he was, but what he should have been:  
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,  
The first to welcome, foremost to defend,  
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,  
Who labors, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,  
Unhonored falls, unnoticed all his worth,  
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth:  
While man, vain insect! hopes to be forgiven,  
And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.  
Oh man! thou feeble tenant of an hour,  
Debased by slavery or corrupt by power,  
Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,  
Degraded mass of animated dust!  
Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,  
Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit!  
By nature vile, ennobled but by name,  
Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.  
Ye! who perchance behold this simple urn,  
Pass on—it honors none you wish to mourn:  
To mark a friend's remains these stones arise:  
I never had but one,—and here he lies.

This we believe, is the correct story of "Boatswain's" epitaph. In all probability the monument is still standing. Although these lines manifest much of the misanthropic spirit of their distinguished author, yet they evidently contain more than "a grain of truth."

VERITAS.

Seaweed Nook, Dec. 22, 1876.

A correspondent of the *Wrexham Guardian* states that at the induction of the new rector of Denbigh the other day, the gravedigger and a Baptist preacher were the only parishioners present, and the latter was called upon to sign a document necessary to effect the induction.

For the Christian Messenger.  
The Ranks thinned.

Dear Editor,—  
At our last Association some astonishment was expressed that Truro church had no death to report. It was a matter for thankfulness on our part as it was of surprise with the assembled brethren.

Our report will be different next year. Four of our number have already passed to their reward; two in the morning of life, and two aged standard bearers.

ROBERT SKINNER,  
son of Thomas Skinner, of Truro, aged 22 a young man of much promise, died on the 21st of October, in Berwick, where he had been spending some time amongst his relations. Three years ago he experienced the grace of God and was baptized by the writer. His course since was in harmony with his profession. In his first love for Christ, the strong desire that filled his soul to be instrumental in saving sinners, led him to think of the ministry as his future vocation. But it pleased God to order otherwise. Not many months had passed away till consumption marked him its victim, and though at times he hoped that the disease had relaxed its hold and he would soon be well again, the hope proved only a delusion. His constitution was slowly but surely undermining. He was seized with hemorrhage at the last which rapidly hastened his death.

His relations with whom he was stopping, and to whom he had greatly endeared himself, did all they could to make him comfortable. The esteemed pastor of the Berwick Church, Bro. Wallace, visited him during his last days, and was greatly delighted with his vigorous Christian character, and strongly expressed resignation to the Divine will.

He has gone to his reward. The Master called him to come up higher. He cheerfully obeyed the summons.

DAVID PAGE  
died on the 8th of November, aged 77 years. Bro. Page was the Senior Deacon of Truro Church, and no church officer better understood the duties and obligations pertaining to their office than he, and I can conceive of none more faithfully fulfilling them than our departed brother. His death, aged though he was, has occasioned a vacancy which cannot be easily filled. His public labors on behalf of the church continued till within a few weeks of his death.

Our Brother professed religion near sixty years ago, and was associated with the first Baptists of this Eastern part of the Province. None knew better than he, the struggles through which they were called to pass in the early stages of their history, and few, I think, could be found, who could more intelligently trace their rise in "troub'ous times."

He was long associated with the Onslow Church, one of the oldest in the Province. Being a resident of Truro, when it was considered advisable to organize a church here, he became one of its constituent members and a Deacon.

His record is an unsullied one. His pastor and brethren always knew where they would find him. He was never known to flinch from duty. His intellectual capacity was of a high order, his reading extensive. His mind was well stored. All the works on Church History at his command he eagerly devoured. He revelled in the inspiring history of Modern Missions, and delighted to trace the heroes and heroines of this enterprise in their struggles and triumphs. His counsel was not hastily given, his thoughts were matured, his words weighed before they were spoken, hence when he spoke his utterances were worthy of consideration. He loved the church. All her institutions and ordinances were dear to him. Her business, Social and Sabbath Meetings, received their due proportion of attention and interest. He entered heartily into all the plans and proposals of the pastor, for the promotion of the cause. The Sabbath School had a large place in his affections, and while able, he was an indefatigable worker in its behalf. In a word, he was ready for every good word and work. All the interests of the church and denomination shared his thought and affection. He was a man of peace. He could be severe if in his judgment severity was called for, but usually was gentle as a child.

His last sickness was short, being only confined to the house a little more than

two weeks. He died as he lived, calm and hopeful to the end. He has "fought the good fight" and finished his course and kept the faith. May God raise up many more such strong men to work for him in the ever extending sphere for christian laymen to occupy.

DANIEL EATON,  
died on the 1st of December, aged 80 years. For about a half a century our aged brother had been identified with the Baptist cause in Onslow and Truro. He was a good man; he loved everybody; and in return was universally beloved. It has been more than hinted, that if the woe pronounced in Luke vi, 26 were applicable to this, as to the Apostolic age, escape from it would be difficult for our brother. The world to him was by no means a 'howling wilderness.' The ordinary trials and bereavements which come unbidden to most families were meted out to him. He lived to follow to the grave the major part of his family. But he never sat long on the ragged edges of trouble, even in the most severe he would find somewhere a pillow of down on which to rest his head, a sweet promise for the support of his soul. He never carried about a long face, the sweet sunlight of a cheerful disposition bathed it, and kept perpetual holiday among the wrinkles. He never borrowed trouble; the past to him was filled with delightful memories, the future was Heaven. The last sickness came, it was tedious and severe, he bore it with the patience and courage of a martyr. The only fear he had was that patience goaded on by the intensity of pain might lose her foothold and stumble. Against this possibility he prayed, and asked others to pray. Prayer was effectual.

One other desire was prominent. He would retain his faculties to the last; this too was granted.

Down to the brink of the cold river the intellectual forces kept even 'pace with the life pulses and simultaneously bade a gentle but temporary adieu to the clayey tabernacle. His widow and two sons, with numerous relatives and friends are left to think of the virtues of the departed and rejoice in the prospect of a happy reunion.

J. E. GOUCHER.

For the Christian Messenger.  
From Rev. R. S. Morton.

Another year has now passed, gone forever. How solemn the thought. Could the results of all that has been transacted by mortals upon the earth during the year 1876, be spread to our view, so that each individual could fully realize what is the end of his or her doings, I have no doubt that we should all be greatly surprised. Many pious ministers, colporters, and christian editors, who have been striving to scatter the good seed of the gospel, and perhaps, feeling that all their efforts were in vain, together with each pious christian, who, in secret, has poured out prayers and tears to God, in behalf of his cause, and for the conversion of sinners, with all those, who, out of love to God, and love to their fellow creatures, have given of their substance to promote the cause of Christ, or relieve suffering humanity, would see that their efforts were not lost. They would see that even the cup of cold water, and the tear of compassion had been noticed, and recorded in heaven, and had not lost their reward. While, on the other hand, those who have spent the year in forming plans by which to plunge the nations into bloody conflict, together with the midnight assassin, the rumseller, the drunkard, the thief, the liar, the slanderer, and even those who have but idly squandered their time and talents, would see that their doings were all recorded before the throne of God; and wrath and punishment according to the guilt of each, is treasured up for, and will by-and-by be poured in fury upon them, unless indeed, they repent of their sin, and find pardon, through the blood of Christ. And now, dear reader, you will ask yourself this question. If I should die this day, what should be my final destiny? Let conscience and the word of God, answer. Those whose faith in, and obedience to Christ, according to the word of God: You may have reason to thank God, and still to persevere in following the precepts and example of your Divine Leader, and patiently endure the trials incident to your pilgrimage through this world of