

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness—Isa. 35-8.

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NO. 3

A FAMOUS HYMN AND ITS AUTHOR

IN TEMPTATION.

Jesu! Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high;
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
O receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me.
All my trust on Thee is stayed;
All my help from Thee I bring:
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.

Wilt Thou not regard my call?
Wilt Thou not accept my prayer?
Lo! I sink, I faint, I fall,
Lo! on Thee I cast my care,
Reach me out Thy gracious hand
While I of Thy strength receive,
Hoping against hope I stand,
Dying, and behold I live!

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find;
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick and lead the blind.
Just and Holy is Thy name;
I am all unrighteousness;
False and full of sin I am;
Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the fountain art,
Freely let me take of Thee;
Spring Thou up within my heart,
Rise, to all eternity.

Of all the hymns bearing the honored name of Wesley, and there were upwards of seven thousand of them, "Jesu! Lover of my soul," is the most famous and popular. Henry Ward Beecher once said: "I would rather have written this hymn than have the fame of all the kings that ever sat on the earth." It appears by right in any and every comprehensive list of English hymns by whomsoever compiled. It is popular among all denominations of Christians speaking our tongue. Its high

place on the Family Herald reader's list of Canada's favorite hymns is in accordance with the general judgment of the age.

Its writer, Charles Wesley, was the eighteenth of nineteen children of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, M. A., a London curate, then Rector of a Lincolnshire parish and for a great part of his life Rector of Epworth. Samuel's father, John, also an English clergyman, had given up his parish for political reasons, and Samuel had been educated for the Nonconformist ministry. But having been appointed, as a student, to take part in a debate against the Church of England, he became convinced against his will that his opinions were mistaken, and forthwith set off on foot for Oxford to prepare for ordination. He was ordained deacon and priest and became a naval chaplain, afterwards a curate. In 1690 in his twenty-eighth year he married the daughter of a Nonconformist clergyman, who like himself had become a member of the Church of England from conviction. He became quite celebrated as a poet, dedicated works to three British queens, and wrote several hymns of which two "Behold the Saviour of mankind" and "O Thou, Who, when I did complain," are still in use. His wife Susanna was a curiously precise mother. When any one of her children reached the fifth birthday, she shut herself up with the little one in a room from 9 till 5 o'clock, emerging only for the mid-day meal. By evening the child knew the alphabet! In a few days it could read the first chapter of Genesis. After that the children could almost teach themselves by reading, with occasional help from her. She took each of her flock by turn into her room one each evening for quiet talk and prayer.

All three of her sons became clergymen, the eldest, Samuel, acting as a wise and loving father to the others after his father's death. All these were hymnwriters, and the youngest daughter, Mehetabel, wrote some good religious poetry.

a period when his father was having bad times in his parish, partly because of his pronounced church opinions, partly because of the bitter political differences of those days, when people still took sides for or against the Stuarts. He had been in jail for debt, and his labors as a contro-

versial writer against those he styled dissenters no doubt hastened his end. Samuel, his brother, then a teacher in the noted Westminster school, got Charles a good education there. He soon won a scholarship which secured him against expense. An Irish gentleman of the same name, wrote offering to adopt him, but he declined it, and that honor went to another branch of the family, the recipient becoming Earl of Mornington, the grandfather of the Duke of Wellington.

At nineteen Charles received a "Westminster studentship" at Christ's Church, Oxford. It was while there, with his elder brother, John, that the habits of a little band of students with whom they were associated, and their methodical religious rules, won for them the name Methodists. Both brothers were ordained deacons and priests in the national English Church, and both set out under the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, for North America, hoping to do missionary work among the Indians. In Georgia they met with many discouragements, and their stay on this side was short. But while there John Wesley published at Charlestown (1737) "A Collection of Psalms and Hymns," the first collection of hymns published for use in the Church of England. Of this edition, only one copy is now known to exist and is of inestimable value. If any old family now possessed a copy it would probably sell for a fortune!

Charles Wesley published about fifty different books of hymns, large and small and wrote about 6,500 hymns, some of which have never yet been put into print.

On Whitsunday, 1737, Charles Wesley "found rest to his soul" after being under the influence of those indefatigable missionaries, the Moravians. He became curate to a friend, the Vicar of Islington, London, but his preaching gave great offence to the congregation and he became like his brother John, an itinerant or travelling evangelist. He married happily and had a large family, three sons who survived him becoming distinguished musicians.

He was an exceptionally talented preacher, and it used to be claimed that he and his brother worked a veritable religious reformation in England and Wales. Neither left the church of their father, but Methodism in its various forms is the

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