

will be to the end of its history ; upheld by the mercy of God ; supported by the people of God ; employed to do the work of God ; encouraged by the blessing of God ; and in all that it does, all at home, and all abroad, guided and accompanied by the Spirit of God.

EDWARD HOARE.

ART. V.—LIFE OF BISHOP WILBERFORCE.

Life of the Right Rev. Samuel Wilberforce, D.D., Lord Bishop of Oxford, and afterwards of Winchester. With Selections from his Diaries and Correspondence. By A. R. ASHWELL, M.A., late Canon of the Cathedral and Principal of the Theological College, Chichester. In three Vols. Vol. I. Portrait. Pp. 550. Murray, 1880.

IN the present notice of this volume we confine ourselves to a mention of the main incidents in the "Life," with a few extracts from the earlier letters. Canon Ashwell's Introduction is brief, and Mr. R. G. Wilberforce's Preface consists of a few lines. For the next two volumes, it appears, some letters have been arranged, and notes made, but nothing written.

"Samuel Wilberforce, the third son of William Wilberforce, and his wife Barbara Ann, eldest daughter of Isaac Spooner, Esq., of Elmdon Hall, in the county of Warwick, was born at Clapham Common," on September 7th, 1805. It is somewhat singular that while the Wilberforce lineage and ancestry can be traced back so far as the days of Henry II., no Wilberfoss, or Wilberforce, as the name has been spelt from the time of his great-grandfather, is found to have entered Holy Orders until the time of Samuel Wilberforce and his two brothers Robert and Henry. The career and character of William Wilberforce "have left their mark upon English life and English society, and they have been vividly set forth in the well-known Biography" of which a revised and condensed edition was sent forth in the year 1868. One feature in his character is beautifully portrayed in the opening pages of the volume before us. From the beginning of the year 1817, when Samuel Wilberforce was in his twelfth year, the father's devotion to his son is exhibited by a "series of not fewer than 600 letters, which are still extant, all carefully numbered and noted in the handwriting of Samuel Wilberforce's maturer years." The biographer remarks that these letters "must have exercised the most powerful influence on the

formation of his character. Compare these letters with his subsequent career, and it will at once be seen that Samuel Wilberforce was indeed his father's son." The shrewd practical counsels of these letters, it is added, are "strung upon the one thread of ever-repeated inculcation of the duty of private prayer as the one holdfast of life." And herein are exhibited, writes Canon Ashwell, the "influences which formed that solid substratum of character which underlay the brilliant gifts and the striking career of Samuel Wilberforce." That this early training was Evangelical, Canon Ashwell, as might have been expected, passes by almost unnoticed. Samuel Wilberforce himself, however, never forgot the fact, or sought to dilute it. Some seventeen years ago, in private conversation with an Evangelical clergyman, he said, "I hold all that my dear father held, with a little more." And we have heard him preach in Evangelical churches sermons which with power and beauty brought out the doctrines of grace; many persons would have termed them decidedly Calvinistic. The truth is, indeed, that the better part of his teaching and preaching, together with the glow of his Missionary zeal, was Evangelical.

In the year 1817 Samuel Wilberforce was a pupil in the house of the Rev. S. Langston, at Hastings, and for a short time with the Rev. E. G. Marsh, at Nuneham, near Oxford. In 1819 he became the pupil of the Rev. George Hodson, chaplain to Mr. Lewis Way, of Stanstead Park, in Sussex, near Emsworth. Mr. Way was an old friend of Wilberforce; and Mrs. Hodson was the niece of Mr. Stephen, who had married his elder sister, and was his enthusiastic ally in the anti-slavery cause. It was at the eagle-lectern in Mr. Way's domestic chapel that Samuel's voice was first heard in the service of the Church. At no great distance from Stanstead was Lavington, with which the future Bishop's name was to be indissolubly connected; and Mr. and Mrs. Sargent were constant visitors at Stanstead Park. Mrs. Sargent, the Bishop's future mother-in-law, was the daughter of Mr. Abel Smith, the elder brother of the first Lord Carrington, and first cousin to Mr. Wilberforce. "Mr. Sargent, as heir to the Lavington property, had been brought up to the bar, but at Cambridge he had come under Mr. Simeon's influence, and received a strong bias towards the ministry of the Church, which resulted ere long in his being ordained and becoming rector of the parish." "Mr. Sargent was the friend and correspondent, and afterwards the biographer, of Henry Martyn, and likewise of Mr. Thomason, the Indian Missionary, and a slight sketch of his life and character was prefixed by his son-in-law, Samuel Wilberforce, to the edition of Henry Martyn's 'Journals and Letters,' which he published while rector of Brighthstone, in 1837." Described by Mr. Wilberforce as "one of the very first Christians I know,"

Mr. Sargent remained the beloved and respected Incumbent of Lavington-cum-Graffham until his decease in 1833.

In October, 1823, Samuel Wilberforce went into residence at Oriel College, Oxford. Hitherto his education had been wholly private. It is evident, we read, from the traits of character noticed in him at the age of seventeen, that his father's careful training had been bestowed on a kindly soil. We may quote here two or three extracts from the father's letters.

One of the earliest letters runs as follows:—

Kensington Gore,

Thursday, March 6th, 1817.

I hope my dear lamb will, during his absence from his earthly father and mother, look up the more earnestly to that Heavenly Father who watches over all that put their trust in Him, and has given special encouragement to apply to Him for every needful blessing. Above all, my dear boy, strive against *formality* in your private prayers. Endeavour to *realise the presence* of your God and Saviour, and to be assured that, though not visible by your bodily eyes, they are really present with you. Try to bring on Henry in all good, ever remembering my advice, not to be satisfied with merely not being unkind, but trying positively to *be* kind. May God bless you, my very dear Boy, and make you a blessing to many hereafter, as well as a comfort to the advancing years of your affec^{te}d father,

W. WILBERFORCE.

The following, two years later, was written after Samuel had gone to Mr. Hodson's:—

Near Worcester, October 5, 1819.

MY VERY DEAR SAMUEL,—Though I have now by my side a large mass of unanswered letters, which accumulated while we were travelling from place to place, yet I must not suffer any other correspondents to prevent my writing to my dearest Saml, especially when I have to reply to so interesting a letter as that which I last received from you

My dear Boy asks me what are his chief faults, that he may pray and watch and strive against them. This is all right; but then I must premise, that is, I must previously suggest to him, that the most effectual way in which a Christian can get the better of any particular fault is by cultivating the *Root of all Holiness*, by endeavouring to obtain a closer union with Jesus Christ, and to acquire more of that blessed Spirit instead of *grieving* it, which will enable him to conquer all his corruptions, and to improve and strengthen all his Christian graces.

I will mention a very striking illustration of the difference between men's striving to improve one or another individual good quality and the improving the common Root of all of them, and thereby improving them all at once. The former is the way in which a human artificer works—a statuary, for instance, sometimes making a finger, sometimes a leg, and so on—while the latter, the workmanship of the Divine Artificer, is like the growth of a plant or a tree, in which all the various

parts are swelling out and increasing, or, as we term it, *growing*, at the same time. I thought this remark would please my dear Saml, so I wrote it down for him. But it teaches us a most important truth, that we should strive to obtain the heavenly principle of growth in grace and in goodness by obtaining more of the Holy Spirit of God, and then we shall improve in every particular grace or virtue. But then we must also examine ourselves, and recollect either at night when we go to bed, or in the morning, as we find best (I am always sleepy at night), what have been the instances in which we have chiefly sinned, and thus we shall ourselves discover our besetting sin. But I will write to you on this subject in another letter.

May God bless my dear Boy with His choicest blessings. I am ever his most affectionate father,

W. WILBERFORCE.

Later on, in 1820, was written a letter "to be read *on Sunday*," of which the following is the chief portion:—

You should do your business and try to excel in it to please your Saviour, as a small return for all that He has done for you, but a return which He will by no means despise. It is this which constitutes the character of a real Christian, that considering himself as bought with a price—viz., that of the blood of Jesus Christ—he regards it as his duty to try and please his Saviour in everything.

It was in a letter of 1821, when Samuel was just sixteen, that his father first wrote to him on the subject of seeking Holy Orders. In 1822, he wrote concerning the importance of steadily and sturdily setting oneself to the work of acting on that beautiful description of the character of true Christians—shining "as Lights." "O my dearest Samuel, what would I give to see you a *φωστῆρ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ*. O my dearest Boy, *aim high*."

In the first letter which he received from his father, after settling in College, occurs the following:—

There is one practice I remember you one day mentioning to me, and I am sorry I did not recollect to name it to you again before you left us, that of friends breakfasting with each other on Sunday mornings. I own to you I think it a very injurious one, and the less excusable because at that early hour of the day the spirit of young men especially can need no such cordial. If you wish I will hereafter give you my sentiments on this point more at large. For the present let it suffice that there are few things not actually sinful (for I do not call this such, but inexpedient) so likely to impair spirituality of the mind in the religious exercises of the day.

Again and again, we read, during his undergraduateship, did his father's letter reiterate this caution as to the Sunday breakfast-party.

In the Michaelmas term of 1823 he began his Oxford life as a Commoner of Oriel. The then Provost was Dr. Copleston, afterwards Bishop of Llandaff; its tutors were Mr. (afterwards Provost) Hawkins, Mr. Tyler, and Mr. Jelf, afterwards Canon of

Christ Church, and Principal of King's College, London; and among its Fellows were Mr. John Keble, Mr. J. H. Newman, Mr. E. B. Pusey, and Mr. H. Jenkyns. Among the commoners were Mr. Richard Hurrell Froude, and Mr. Robert Hurrell Froude. The account of his College life is meagre in the extreme.¹ He took a first class in Mathematics, and a second in Classics, in the Michaelmas term of 1826. In the same autumn he was a candidate for a Balliol Fellowship. Moberly (now Bishop of Salisbury) and F. Newman were elected; and before another vacancy occurred his plans were changed. His attachment to his future wife had been formed at an unusually early age, and though there was no positive engagement, there was no secret about the attachment, nor was it ever interrupted. Part of 1827 was spent in a foreign tour. "On June 11th, 1828, St. Barnabas' day—Barnabas the son of consolation as he often used to say with satisfaction, S. Wilberforce and Emily Sargent were married in Lavington Church, Mr. C. Simeon, his father-in-law's old friend, officiating on the occasion." On Sunday, December 21st, after he had been examined by Dr. Burton, he was ordained Deacon in Christ Church, Oxford, by Bishop Lloyd, and in about a month he entered upon his duties as Curate in sole charge of Checkendon, a quiet village near Henley-on-Thames. The parish and church were small, the rectory was a sufficient house. It had been expected that Mr. J. B. Sumner, Vicar of Mapledurham, would have been a neighbour; but he was promoted to the Bishopric of Chester. After sixteen cheerful, happy months at Checkendon, Bishop Sumner, of Winchester, offered him the pleasant Rectory of Brighthelmston in the Isle of Wight, to which he was inducted in June, 1830, while yet under five-and-twenty.

During the whole of the Brighthelmston period, 1830—1840, he "kept a remarkably minute and accurate diary of each day's work and movements," and further he was an active correspondent, his letters being "unreserved and open-hearted." From the year 1830, therefore, the *Memoirs* become fuller and increase in interest. To the many points which come before us during those years, however, we cannot now even refer. To complete our sketch we may simply state that he received the offer of the Arch-

¹ There is no doubt that, owing to the influences of Oriel, his views became High Church before his ordination. The air of Oxford was sacerdotal. Still he did not take in all the Tractarian opinions. In particular he protested against several of Pusey's views. Nor would he ever give countenance to that new-fangled, utterly un-Anglican, most mischievous theory about the Eucharist which has led so many to Rome. Many of the extreme opinions, we may add, which appeared in the *Church Quarterly Review*, edited by Canon Ashwell, are either virtually or openly condemned in the writings of Bishop Wilberforce.

deaconry of Surrey in the year 1839, made a "striking public appearance" at Exeter Hall, at a great anti-slavery meeting, in the year 1840, Prince Albert in the chair (he was nominated one of the Prince's Chaplains six months later), and received his Canonry as Archdeacon about the same time. In September he delivered his primary charge, as Archdeacon of Surrey, and in October he accepted his Bishop's offer of the important Rectory of Alverstoke, thus severing a connection with the Isle of Wight which had lasted for ten years and three months—"a period to which he always looked back as one of the most unclouded happiness."

He had been appointed to deliver the Bampton Lectures in 1841, and while occupied in reading during his residence at Winchester, the blow fell which he had in some measure anticipated, and which coloured his whole after-life to a degree which only those who knew him intimately were aware of—the death of his wife. Their fourth son, Basil Orme, was born on February 8th; on the morning of the 10th she passed away.

The extracts from his diary at this time form, in our judgment, the most striking, as unquestionably they form the most touching, portion of the volume before us. Of his happy married life—homely details, and ways of living—of Mrs. Wilberforce's character and influence, we are told absolutely nothing. But as to his great affliction his diary is full and eloquent. We quote some verses which were written nearly eight years after his loss:—

A VISION.

Lavington, Feb. 10th, 1849.

I sat within my glad home, and round about me played
Four children in their merriment, and happy noises made;
Beside me sat their mother in her loveliness and light—
I ne'er saw any like her, save in some vision bright.

It was in life's young morning that our hearts together grew
Beneath its sparkling sunlight, and in its steeping dew;
And the sorrows and the joys of a twelve years' changeful life
Had drawn more closely to me, my own, my blessed wife.

Then at our door One knocked, and we rose to let him in,
For the night was wild and stormy and to turn him thence were sin.
With a "Peace be to this household" His shelterers He blest,
And sat Him down amongst us like some expected guest.

The children's noise was hushed, the mother softly spoke,
And my inmost spirit thrilled with the thoughts which in me woke;
For it seemed like other days within my memory stored,
Like Mamre's evening plain, or Emmaus' evening board.

His form was veiled from us, His mantle was not raised,
But we felt that eyes of tenderness and love upon us gazed:
His lips we saw not moving, but a deep and inward tone
Spake like thunder's distant voices unto each of us alone.

“ Full often have ye called me and bid me to your home,
 And I have listened to your words and at your prayer am come ;
 And now my voice is strange to you, and ‘ wherefore art thou here ?’
 Your throbbing hearts are asking with struggling hope and fear.

“ It was My love which shielded your helpless infant days ;
 It was My care which guided you through all life’s dangerous ways.
 I joined your hearts together, I blessed your marriage vow,
 Then trust and be not fearful though my ways seem bitter now.”

We spoke no word of answer, nor said He any more,
 But as one about to leave us He passéd to the door ;
 Then ere He crossed the threshold, He beckoned with His hand
 That she who sat beside should come at His command.

Then rose that wife and mother, and went into the night,
 She followed at His bidding, and was hidden from our sight ;
 And though my heart was breaking I strove my will to bow,
 For I saw His hands were piercéd, and thorns had torn His brow.

In the year 1842 Archdeacon Wilberforce was summoned frequently to preach at Court. In March, 1845, he received the offer of the Deanery of Westminster, and in October the same year, he was offered the Bishopric of Oxford. On November 30th, he was consecrated at Lambeth, and on December 13th he was enthroned in Christ Church Cathedral. The volume closes with the end of the miserable Hampden controversy, in which he lost the favour of Prince Albert, December, 1848.



ART. VI.—SIMEON, THORNTON, AND NEWTON.

THE following letters were addressed to Mr. Simeon when commencing his ministry at Trinity Church. They will be read with special interest, when it is remembered what trials he had then to encounter, and what that ministry was afterwards, by the grace of God, in its eminent faithfulness, wisdom, and devotion, and ever-increasing influence for more than half a century.

Charles Simeon was ordained on Trinity Sunday, May 26, 1782, by the Bishop of Ely on his fellowship at King’s College, and began his ministry in St. Edward’s Church (“ in good old Latimer’s pulpit ”), serving that parish for Mr. Atkinson during the long vacation.

I have reason to hope (Mr. Simeon writes in 1813) that some good was done then. In the space of a month or six weeks, the church became quite crowded; the Lord’s table was attended by three times the usual number of communicants, and a considerable stir was made among the dry bones. I visited at the parish from house to house without making any difference between Churchmen and Dissenters ;