

thing else that may be conducive to your relief.' But I, being very bad with my fever and ague, could neither eat nor drink."

It is not wonderful that the great sufferings and toils of Silas should, even at a very early period of life, prostrate his health and subject him to repeated and vehement attacks of illness. He was but twenty-three when he married; still, however, a sailor, and destined yet for some wild experiences on the seas. Not long however. A married life disposed him for a home life, and he accepted, while still a very young man, the position of a schoolmaster, beneath the patronage of a Lady Luther, in the county of Essex. He was not in this position very long. Silas, although an unconverted man, must have had strong religious feelings; and the clergyman of the parish, fond of smoking and drinking with him—and it may well be conceived what an entertaining companion Silas must have been in those days, with his budget of adventures—ridiculed him for his faith in the scriptures and his belief in Bible theology. This so shocked Silas, that, making no special profession of religion, he yet separated himself from the clergyman's company, and shortly after he left that neighborhood and again sought his fortune, but without any very cheerful prospects, in London. It was in 1740 that a young blacksmith introduced him to the people whom he had hitherto hated and despised—the Methodists. He heard John Wesley preach at the Foundry in the Moor Fields—the cradle of Methodism in London—from the text, "I write unto you, little children, for your sins are forgiven you." This set his soul on fire; he himself became a Methodist, notwithstanding the very vehement opposition of his wife, to whom he appears to have been very tenderly attached, and who herself was a very motherly and virtuous woman, but altogether indisposed to the new notions, as many people considered them. He looked up in circumstances, and became an important managing clerk on a wharf in Wapping. While there, Mr. Wesley repeatedly and earnestly pressed him to take charge of the charity school he had founded at the Foundry, and after long hesitation he did so; and it was here that, while attending a service at five o'clock in the morning, he heard Mr. Wesley preach from the text, "I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." By a most remarkable application of this charge to himself, Silas testifies that his mind was stirred with a strange compunction, as he thought he had never cared for or attempted to ameliorate the condition or to minister to the souls of the crowds of those unhappy malefactors who then, almost weekly, expiated their offences, very often of the most trivial description, on the gallows. It seems that the hearing that sermon proved