

Northern Messenger

Little Post 417
60339

VOLUME XXXIII., No. 37.

MONTREAL, SEPTEMBER 16, 1898.

30 Cts. Per An. Post-Paid

Richard Baxter's House.

In Acton, Middlesex, England, stands the quaint old weather-beaten house in which the great non-conformist preacher, Richard Baxter, author of 'The Saints' Everlasting Rest' and other books, lived with his gentle companion and amiable wife. It has suffered from time and vandalism, and efforts are now being made to rescue it from threatened destruction. This house speaks of one of the most interesting periods in Baxter's life. It was to Acton he went in 1662, after being dispossessed of his Kidderminster parish, and preaching his last sermon in London before the Act of Uniformity (St. Bartholomew's Act, it was called, because it went into force on St. Bartholomew's Day), which

lived,' he wrote, 'in inviolated love. I know not that ever we had any breach in point of love or interest, save only that she somewhat grudged that I had persuaded her to surrender so much of her estate to the disabling of her from helping others so much as she desired.' Of their life in this old house at Acton, he says, she busied herself in household affairs and was very happy. The conditions of marriage which he had laid down, and she had accepted, were these: 1. He should have possession of no property belonging to her before marriage. 2. That she should so alter her affairs that he would be entangled in no law-suits. 3. That 'she would expect none of my time which my ministerial work should require.' He testifies after her death that she increased

was, and how he could punish, you wouldn't teach me to change my faith!

It seemed that the superstitious African had been the vassal and pupil of a more powerful priest, whose cruel memory held him to endless servitude—a pagan Samuel bound to the tomb of a pagan Eli. For thirty years he had watched over that grave with a kind of demon-worship, building a fire there every evening, and offering every morning a sacrifice of rice and rum. There was something appalling in the old man's frown as he announced his degrading homage to the grave.

Then there came to the lady's mind the reference to the grave, of an inspired poet three thousand years ago. She turned to the third chapter of Job, and read the nineteenth verse: 'The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master.' The effect upon the astonished priest was as if a voice from the sky had spoken to him. There was an agony of anxiety in the tone when at length he asked, 'Is that really so?'

The truth came to him with all the force of a new thought, and it finally released him. Once assured that he was no longer his old master's slave, he was as eager to be a follower of Christ as he had formerly been afraid to be. His teacher framed a simple prayer for him, which he was quick to learn. To him it meant the surrender of his old superstition once for all. When the teacher would have made him go over it again, he asked her:

'Does God hear the first time?'

'Yes.'

'Then,' said he, 'no need to tell him twice.'

For once the pupil was wiser than his guide. She felt that the warning not to 'use vain repetitions as the heathen do,' had come back on herself.

More blessed than any triumph of eloquence or scholarship is the gift to say the right word—and no more. It is an inspiration as truly as the word itself. — 'Youth's Companion.'

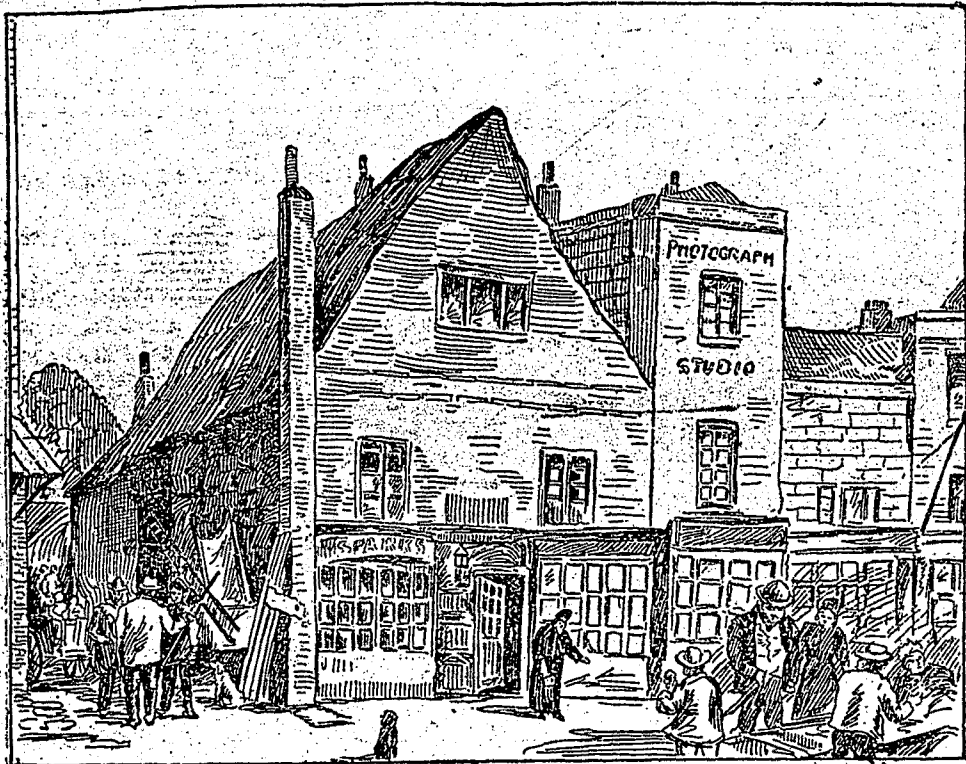
Sister Anne.

In 1845 a young society girl drifted into an Episcopal church. She was the daughter of wealthy parents, and her whole time was given up to the thoughtless dissipation of time indulged in by many society people. That morning, little dreaming that it was to be the most eventful day of her life, she laughed, dressed herself beyond criticism, went to the church and nonchalantly took her seat in her friend's pew.

The man who occupied the pulpit that day was the founder of St. Luke's Hospital, in New York. He was a devotee to charitable works, and his words were the expression of a large Christian experience.

In his sermon that morning he drew a picture of Jephthah, the warrior, who, in an agony of prayer for victory, promised to sacrifice the first thing met on his way home from a victorious battle-field. The awful sequel followed: the greeting of his daughter as she came outside the city walls with her attendant minstrels, to welcome the victor, and the relentless fulfillment of the father's vow by the offering up of his dearest possession.

The spiritual application of this terrible drama made such an impression on the young society girl that she decided immedi-



RICHARD BAXTER'S HOUSE AT ACTON, ENGLAND.

excluded 2,000 divines from service in the English Church. From here he was sent to Clerkenwell prison on the charge of holding a conventicle, of which matter, he says, he was 'grieved to leave his people, and that he was to be deprived of the exceeding grateful neighborhood of the Lord Baron Hale (Sir Matthew, the Chief Justice), who could scarce refrain from tears when he heard of the first warrant for my appearance.' Mrs. Baxter chose to share his incarceration. My wife,' he wrote, 'was never so cheerful a companion to me as in prison. She had brought so many necessaries that we kept house as contentedly and comfortably as at home, though in a narrower room.' It was to Acton he had brought her a bride, he near fifty, she in her twenties. He had expressed positive and public disapprobation of marriage for clergymen, and the king's marriage was hardly more talked of than his. Margaret Charlton came under deep conviction while listening to him at Kidderminster. She learned to love him; their marriage ended more happily than was feared by those who knew his peculiar disposition and the incongruity of their ages. We

his usefulness, often calling his attention to duties which sickness caused him to forget. — 'Christian Herald.'

Wherein Lies Power.

A lady teacher in one of the missions of the United Brethren in North Africa, became greatly interested in a very intelligent, but repulsive-looking old negro priest. She often conversed with him, and sometimes found him a willing and quiet listener. Blood-stained heathen as he was—for in the service of his terrible religion he had officiated at unnumbered human sacrifices—he nevertheless seemed to feel the charm of the gospel story as the Christian woman told it, and evidently stood in some awe of the book she always carried.

One day he said to her, 'I like the word you talk. It is sweet past anything I ever heard, and if I wasn't my master's slave, I'd be a Jesus man.'

His 'master' had been dead thirty years! Pointing to the burial mound near-by, he exclaimed, 'If you knew what a great man he