

working in neighbours' houses or at home, at such business as might be brought to him. "The Bunyans," says a friend, "were of the national religion, as men of that calling commonly were." Bunyan himself, in a passage which has been always understood to refer to his father, describes him "as an honest, poor labouring man, who, like Adam unparadised, had all the world to get his bread in, and was very careful to maintain his family." In those days there were no village schools in England; the education of the poor was an apprenticeship to agriculture or handicraft; their religion they learnt at home or in church. Young Bunyan was more fortunate. In Bedford there was a grammar school, which had been founded in Queen Mary's time by the Lord Mayor of London, Sir William Harper. Hither, when he was old enough to walk to and fro, over the mile of road between Elstow and Bedford, the child was sent, if not to learn Aristotle and Plato, to learn at least "to read and write according to the rate of other poor men's children."

If religion was not taught at school, it was taught with some care in the cottages and farmhouses by parents and masters. It was common in many parts of England, as late as the end of the last century, for the farmers to gather their apprentices about them on Sunday afternoons, and to teach them the Catechism. Rude as was Bunyan's home, religious notions of some kind had been early and vividly impressed upon him. He caught, indeed, the ordinary habits of the boys among whom he was thrown. He learnt to use bad language, and he often lied. When a child's imagination is exceptionally active, the temptations to untruth are correspondingly powerful. The inventive faculty has its dangers, and Bunyan was eminently gifted in that way. He was a violent, passionate boy be-

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