

ENGLISH HEARTS AND ENGLISH HANDS; OR, THE RAILWAY AND THE TRENCHES, by the Author of *Memorials of Capt. H. VICARS*. New York: Robt. Carter & Brothers. Montreal: B. Dawson. 12mo.

This is a little book of singular interest and peculiar merit. Its purport is to show men and women who are placed in higher positions of life, how much of delicate feeling is to be found amongst that great mass of their countrymen, who eat their bread under the heavier portion of the primeval curse. The writer's purpose is also to suggest to Christian people in the upper ranks of life how much the trials of the lowly may be softened and their labours lightened by kindly interest in their daily toil. The book is a Diary of a warm hearted Christian lady's labours among the navvies who worked at the erection of Sydenham Crystal Palace, and were engaged for the "Army Works Corps" in the Crimea. It contains many beautiful and noble trials of English character. These strong men are shown to possess high susceptibilities of religious affection and culture. Disinterested labours for their welfare are also appreciated by them to an extent unknown among those who occupy more favoured positions in the social scale. The narratives of this volume and the letters from the navvies which it contains have all the marks of genuine truthfulness. There is a freshness and a naiveté about them quite charming. We cannot too strongly recommend this book to the attention of Christian readers, feeling assured that they will rise from its perusal greatly enriched with spiritual thoughts and affections.

The following extract will give an idea of its contents:—

"Few features in the character of the navvies have attracted my admiration, and interested me so warmly, as their power of strong brotherly friendship for each other. Separated, as so often they are in mere boyhood, from the sweet influences of home—as beautiful and binding in the cottage as in the castle—the yearning of the young heart for human affection often finds its response in a friendship formed after the fashion of the unrivalled love which glorified the lives of Jonathan and David. An unselfish regard, and even generous preference for each other's benefit, is no uncommon trait; and many a man have I seen, in time of sickness, supported by his "mate" with a brother's kindness, and nursed with a mother's gentle care.

The friendship between Samnel Bush and Joseph W—— was an instance of this. They had wandered about the country together, and had worked side by side, mutually sharing their gains, and nursing each other through illness and accident. Together they had too often joined in the reckless revelry of the public-house; together they had striven against its temptations; had fallen back into them again; and together they had made fresh efforts to live a new life.

It was in the month of February 1854, that Joseph W—— first became personally known to me, although Samuel had been in the habit of bringing him to the readings for some time previously.

One morning Joseph came to the Rectory in breathless haste, with a request that I would come and see his landlord, whom he believed to be dying from a sudden attack of inflammation. I promised to go immediately after breakfast; but he would not hear of any delay, urging that it might be too late.

When we reached the cottage we found that the poor man was quite sensible, and anxious for prayer. As I rose from my knees, I heard Joseph going down stairs, sobbing; and as I passed through the kitchen on my way out, he was sitting with his arms on the table and his face hidden. I said, "Joseph, I hope Clarke's sudden illness speaks to you to be ready."

"It do, it do," he said, without looking up; "and I hope it will speak to Sammy, too. Sam is a good boy, if it weren't for the drink; but that has been the ruin of us both."

"But you and Samuel are both trying to live better lives now? Be earnest in asking the Holy Spirit of God to help you to make the change at once, for 'the time is short.'"

"Yes; is it not?" (with his face still hidden.) "Look at Clarke! Oh, I hope he'll be saved!"

"I think you must have had a good mother, Joseph, who taught you something of the value of an undying soul."