

## Godly Laymen of the English Church.

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SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

BORN 25TH DECEMBER, 1642, DIED 20TH MARCH, 1727.

"Oh, speak the wondrous man! how mild, how calm,  
How greatly humble, how divinely good,  
How firmly established on Eternal Truth!  
Fervent in doing well, with every nerve  
Still pressing on."

THOMSON.



SIR ISAAC NEWTON was born on Christmas Day, in the year 1642, at Woolsthorpe, in Lincolnshire, and was baptized at Colsterworth, on the 1st of January, 1643. His mother (having become a widow ere Isaac was born) had the entire care of his education. She lived at the humble Manor House, which, for about an hundred years, had been in the possession of the family, who came originally from Newton, in Lancashire. It seems to have been her wish to train her son in the pursuits of agriculture, that he might be fitted to manage his own little property. When he was twelve years old he was sent to the Grammar School at Grantham, and, according to information which Sir Isaac subsequently gave to his nephew, he was at first very low in the school. But it happened one day that the boy that was above him gave him a severe blow, from which he suffered acute pain; and Isaac, mortified and indignant, now applied himself so diligently that he rose above his companion, and became the head of the school. And now his career of discovery began. During the hours of play his mind was occupied in making little windmills, water-clocks, and carriages. "He introduced into the school the flying of paper kites; and he is said to have been at great pains in determining their best form and proportions, and in ascertaining the position and number of the points by which the string should be attached. He made also paper lanterns, by the light of which he went to school in the winter mornings, and he attached these lanterns to the tails of his kites on a dark night, so as to inspire the rustics with the notion that they were comets."

When he was fifteen years of age, his mother removed him from school that he might attend the markets, and learn the management of the sheep and the cows; but this did not at all suit the bent of his mind. He was more often found sitting behind some hedge engrossed in his various studies. "The perusal of a book, the execution of a model, or the superintendence of a water-wheel of his own construction, whirling the glittering spray from some neighbouring stream, absorbed all his thoughts when the sheep were going astray, or the cattle were treading down the corn."

A better course was wisely adopted. He was again sent to the Grammar School, and in June, 1660, in the eighteenth year of his age, Newton was admitted into Trinity College, Cambridge—a college which was then high in estimation, having Dr. Isaac Barrow as its tutor, but which has now a renown, owing to Newton's residence and discoveries, as distinguished as any in the world. Just within the chapel of the College is a beautiful statue of Sir Isaac Newton, an object of great interest to all lovers of learning. It appears that when he entered the University he had not even seen *Euclid's Elements*, so that Cambridge was really "the birth-place of his genius." When, however, these "Propositions," which