

tive to fast in Lent believe, above all others, in missions to the heathen. Let us all try it.—YES, IN CHRIST'S NAME, LET US TRY IT.

CHRIST AND THE SOUL.

When thou turn'st away from ill,
Christ is this side of thy hill.

When thou turnest toward good,
Christ is walking in thy wood.

When thy heart says, "Father, pardon!"
Then the Lord is in thy garden.

When stern duty wakes to watch,
Then His hand is on the latch.

But when Hope thy song doth rouse,
Then the Lord is in the house.

When to love is all thy wit,
Christ doth at thy table sit.

When God's will is thy heart's pole,
Then is Christ thy very soul.

—George Macdonald, in *The Spectator*.

FOR PARISH AND HOME.

SOME GREAT CHURCHMEN.

IV.

HENRY VENN.

HENRY VENN was one of the spiritual giants raised up by God in the eighteenth century to revive His work in England, and, through England, to influence the whole world. He was a member of a band of select spirits who, under God, at a time of great spiritual darkness, awakened the Church of England to her true vocation as a teacher of primitive Christianity, and reasserted those Evangelical principles which were so long forgotten and obscured, but which were rediscovered and reaffirmed at "the bright and blissful Reformation." This band of Evangelical clergy was composed of men who were independent of the Methodist movement, who worked altogether within the parochial lines of the Church of England. Benjamin Jenks began to publish his writings just when William the Third was ascending the throne, and he rested his hopes of a revival of spiritual life, as the Rev. Charles Hile has pointed out, on the reassertion of the great doctrine of justification by faith, for his own history had "burnt into him the conviction that the article of a standing or falling church was also (as it has been well put) the article of a standing or falling soul." One of the earliest of this band was William Grimshaw, who adopted Evangelical views before the influence of Wesley had been felt in England. William Romaine was at Oxford in Wesley's time, but there is no trace of the influence of the early

Methodists upon his opinions. The same is true of Walker of Truro, Adam of Winttingham, Richard Conyers, Berridge, Toplady, the hymn writer, John Newton, Joseph Milner of Hull, Robinson of Leicester, Thomas Scott, and Charles Simeon. These men of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were led to adopt their church views, under the Holy Spirit's influence, by an independent study of the Bible. They soon saw that the same views are taught in the Prayer Book.

Henry Venn was descended from ancestors who were clergymen of the Church of England in an uninterrupted line from the time of the Reformation. Like the Bardsleys, the Bickersteths, the Moules, and, turning to Canada, the Baldwins, the Venn family has given to the church many able and devoted sons. And as Bishop Ryle has pointed out, while Whitefield, Wesley, and Berridge left no sons "to keep their name in remembrance," for more than a century there has never been wanting a minister bearing the honored name of Venn to preach the same doctrine which Henry Venn loved and proclaimed.

Henry Venn showed even in early youth the marks of a strong character. He was so active in all that he undertook, and showed such strength of mind, that Dr. Gloucester Ridley declared: "This boy will go up to Holborn, and either stop at Ely Place" (the episcopal residence of the Bishop of Ely in London), "or go on to Tyburn." He was educated at St. John's College, and at Jesus College, Cambridge. While at college he was considered one of the best cricketers in England. The week preceding his ordination he played in a match between Surrey and All England. He was on the winning side, but at the close of the match, to the astonishment of the spectators, he threw down his bat, saying: "Whoever wants a bat may take that, as I have no further occasion for it; I will never have it said of me, 'Well struck, parson!'"

Henry Venn's religious impressions may be traced to deep heart-searchings concerning prayer. He had been accustomed to say in a form of prayer: "That I may live to the glory of Thy name." "Do I live as I pray?" was the question brought home to him, and as he listened in the darkness to the tolling of the great bell of St. Mary's he meditated much upon death and judgment, heaven and hell. Law's "Serious Call" was his devotional manual, but he soon learned to look less to such helps, to find in the Word of God his

special light and his special food, and then he was able to say: "Henceforth I will call no man Master!" It was from the Scriptures that he learned to rely for justification upon the all-sufficient merits and the infinite mercies of the Redeemer. He saw that sinners are brought through the power of the Gospel into a new state of reconciliation to God, of adoption into His family, of grace and mercy.

Venn's first ministerial work was the curacy of Barton, near Cambridge. He next served St. Matthew's, Friday street, London, and Horsley, in Surrey. He then went to Clapham, and at the same time officiated during the week at three different London churches, St. Alban's, Work street; St. Swithin's, London street; and St. Antholin's, in which churches he held lectureships. But it was at Huddersfield that he did the best work, as men see it, for Christ and His church. Like McCheyne at Dundee, he changed, under God, the life of the place. He found it full of darkness, error, and unbelief, and he preached a Gospel which alone can dispel the gloom by the clear shining of the light. His influence was felt far and wide. A parishioner used to say that he found in the church a foretaste of heaven. "Never was a minister like our minister." The first impressions of this parishioner were gained from a week evening service. He found the church crowded with people—all silent, many weeping. The text was, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." The sermon was blessed to the conversion of many souls. The secret of his success is told by another parishioner. "Always at work, he took every method of instructing his people; he left nothing unturned." He showed what Dr. Chalmers has well called the aggressive side of the Church of England.

At the age of 47 he was threatened with that deadly enemy of our race, consumption. His health compelled him to take up another sphere of labor. He found in the little parish of Nelling, in Huntingdonshire, a "providential retreat." Venn soon proved here that even the smallest place may be made a centre of influence. His congregation only consisted of twenty or thirty people, but as Nelling is only a short distance from Cambridge his personality and his views were brought to bear upon many young men at the university. Visitors flocked to him for special counsel from every part of the country.

Henry Venn was a great preacher. We judge this, not from his few published