

Goldingham, in Buckinghamshire, at the modest stipend of £50 a year. His spiritual state was such, however, that he afterwards confessed that at that period of his life he was unacquainted with "the grand outlines of the Gospel." He was, as a matter of fact, a Unitarian. The first change in his views arose from his study of Bishop Burnet's "History of My Own Times," and the statement of the Eighth Article regarding the Athanasian Creed, with its clear statement of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

But the human instrument of Scott's conversion was undoubtedly John Newton. Scott's studies took up so much time that there was the danger of neglect of his pastoral work. Indeed, such was the case in two instances. The last illness of two parishioners had not drawn from him any consolation for a dying hour, but Newton had found his way from Olney to minister to their spiritual need. Scott, without taking offence, sought the friendship of his more zealous neighbor. His love of controversy came out in an effort on his part to draw Newton into a discussion upon debatable subjects. But Newton felt that God was leading him, and he would not enter into any heated debate, seeing at a glance that Scott could be influenced through his affections, and the deep needs of his heart, rather than upon the field of argument, which so often leads to strife. He, therefore, answered Scott's argumentative letters in a most kind and conciliatory spirit. This plan succeeded admirably, and Scott soon sought Newton for instruction in the faith, listened eagerly to his sermons, and was led, under God, into the full light of the perfect liberty of the Gospel.

Scott was not led to accept the evangelical position without the closest study, accompanied by prayer and meditation. He was a clear reasoner, and a most determined seeker after truth. For three long years in practical retirement, he sought, prayerfully and earnestly, for a system of belief which would satisfy his intellect and warm his heart. Alone with God, with his Bible ever open before him, in agonizing prayer, he sought and found the truth which alone can supply the deep longing of the heart for God. He found the Word of God its own best expositor, and from its sacred pages the light beamed into his soul, which dispelled the night of error and unbelief. No shadow of doubt was left in his own mind. He felt assured that in answer to his earnest pleading, combined with sincerity of purpose and

singleness of aim, Christ had fulfilled His promise, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." His mind was so clear on this point that to insinuate any other conclusion was to hint that God had broken His promises.

Scott's opinions were gained, first of all, from the Bible. But they were strengthened by the careful study of the Homilies of the church, which the Thirty-fifth Article states contain "a godly and wholesome doctrine," especially by Hooker's sermon on Justification, which opened to his mind the Pauline view, and reconciled the teaching of the Church of England with the Scriptures. He held that he was indebted for his opinions to the Word of God alone, and claimed that the only uninspired books consulted by him were by writers of great reputation in his own church. He held with great firmness that evangelical principles are the true principles of the Church of England, and that they are in perfect accord with Scripture. And as Dr. Eadie points out, "His strict adherence to evangelical truth was not an official, but a passionate attachment with him."

Thomas Scott's ministerial life was spent at Stoke, at Ravenstone and Weston Underwood, at Olney, Newton's old parish, at the Lock Hospital, London, at St. Mildred's, Bread street, and at Aston Sandford. He was a hard-working clergyman, both as a preacher and a pastor. In one parish he had four sermons every Sunday, and walked fourteen miles to deliver them. While in London, he was special preacher at St. Margaret's, Lothbury, taking duty as a preacher, and administering the communion every alternate Sunday, at 6 a.m., walking seven miles going and returning.

It is interesting to remember that Scott was the first secretary of the Church Missionary Society, a position which he held during his residence in London. The meeting, made up of sixteen clergy and nine laymen, over which Venn presided, and which decided upon the formation of the C.M.S., was held on April 12th, 1799. The society was practically formed in 1800, and in 1801, Scott preached the first anniversary sermon. He was also a firm friend of the Bible Society, which was established in 1804.

But Scott's life work was his commentary on the Bible. It had often been his wish, as he studied his Bible, to preach upon every part of it. In a way that he little dreamt of, he was given an opportunity of addressing thousands in a weekly com-

mentary upon the text of Scripture issued by a London publisher in one hundred successive numbers. Scott had no critical equipment for the mighty task he undertook. He was not an exact scholar, in the modern sense. He was not a master of Hebrew or Greek. He was not skilled in the chronology or geography of scriptural times and places. He was not learned in the history of the ancient world. He had not cultivated a literary style. He was simply an earnest student of the Word of God, who had grasped its plain meaning, and whose listening ear ever heard the voice of the Lord declaring His will to mankind. His commentary shows no mark of genius, save that of hard work. It is unadorned by any special charm of diction, or felicity of style. But it contains solid thought, and brings to bear upon the text of Scripture a wide and accurate knowledge of every part of the Bible. The aim, evidently, was to explain Scripture by Scripture. His one purpose was to be practical. He borrowed little, if anything, from other writers, and endeavored to be original and independent. Dr. Eadie says: "Scott does not sparkle, but he is always judicious. His exposition is a very equal production. Sobriety of thought distinguishes all his writings, and occasionally much information is condensed into a small compass. His illustrations are compact and weighty; and his treatment of infidel objections is usually powerful and conclusive."

Scott's commentary was wonderfully successful. Thousands of copies were sold in England, and for every copy bought in England two purchasers were found in America. The sales have amounted to over half a million pounds sterling. The author, however, received little benefit from the sales. For the original work of 174 numbers, he received 164 guineas, but he had lent the publisher £800 of borrowed money, which he lost altogether. The first edition was of 3,000 copies, and Scott calculated that he had done the whole work for nothing. The same sad fate followed subsequent editions. And we find him, near the close of life, sadly confessing, after an investigation of his accounts, that while in his own lifetime £199,900 had been paid for his books, his sole income from them had been about £47 per annum, and that they had involved him in a debt of £1200. This debt his friends made up by a gift of £2000; but it remained true that he had labored and other men received the benefit of the long days and nights spent in toil with brain and pen. But in "all labor there is profit," and Scott had his own re-