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A Christian Hero.

Up to the time that Hedley Vicars went to Canada, in 1851, religion was a subject that had concerned him but little, if at all. Like most of his brother-officers in the army, he indulged in dissipation and excess, especially when his regiment was quartered at Corfu. A feeling of remorse oppressed him, arising

There were no half-measures with him. He at once forsook bad companions, and gave all his leisure time to the study of the Bible and speaking to the soldiers about religion. He made no secret of the change that had taken place in him, and was fully prepared for a storm of reproach and ridicule. It soon be-

He was a diligent attendant at church and at Bible classes; he read the Scriptures and talked earnestly to the men of his company, and prayed with them, taught in Sunday schools, and visited the sick.

His colonel, impressed with his steady, upright character, offered him the post of adjutant, with the remark, 'Vicars, you are the man I can best trust with responsibility.' It was not a post he coveted, but he thought it would be imprudent to decline the honor. Soon after the appointment, one of the officers laughingly made the significant comment, 'He won't do for it—he's too conscientious.'

Vicars returned to England in 1853, when he devoted all the time he could spare from his military duties to religious and philanthropic work. Besides looking after the religious interests of his men, he taught in ragged schools, frequently addressed the navvies working at the Crystal Palace, took an active part in the operations of the Soldier's Friendly Society, and in other ways identified himself with Christian workers. With regard to his influence on the soldiers, it was said that he had 'steadied about four hundred men of his regiment.'

Some time after the outbreak of the Crimean War the 97th Regiment was ordered to the Crimea.

Vicars shared all privation and exposure with his men, and often gave up small luxuries and comforts for their benefit. At one of the outposts he gave up his tent, because he thought some of them were less hardy than he, and he slept in the open air under a frail roof made of cuttings from bushes.

Through all the times of suffering and misery Hedley Vicars kept up the spirits and hopes of his men, and seized every opportunity of reading and praying with them, and bringing consolation to the last moments of the dying.

At length the day arrived when he was to fight his first and last battle.

Some fifteen thousand Russians marched out of Sebastopol, and silently and stealthily approached the British and French lines. The French were attacked, and had to retire. About two thousand Russians then entered a ravine, with the intention of sweeping off the British troops.

It was believed at first that they were Frenchmen, and Vicars, who held an advanced post, was the first to discover they were Russians. He immediately ordered his men to lie down. When the enemy were within about twenty yards he ordered a volley to be fired; then, springing to his feet and flourishing his sword, shouted, 'Now, 97th, on your pins, and charge!'

He dashed forward at the head of his two hundred men, against two thousand Russians, and soon received a bayonet wound in the breast. But still he fought and struggled. The Russians were slowly yielding to the handful of British.

Again the voice of Vicars rang out, 'Men of the 97th, follow me!' The men pressed on, inspired by the pluck and courage of their leader.



chiefly from the heavy debts he had contracted, and from the grief thus occasioned to his widowed mother. Then his conduct began to improve, and remorse for his excesses turned to hearty repentance.

The influence of Dr. Twining, garrison chaplain at Halifax, had results that proved a turning-point in the gay soldier's career. Young Vicars firmly made up his mind to renounce, once for all, the evil practices to which he had been addicted, and endeavor to live as an earnest and consistent Christian

came a joke among the officers that Vicars had 'turned Methodist,' and in many ways he was the butt of hostility and sarcasm. But he contrived to stand his ground without flinching.

One morning two or three young officers entered his room, and found him reading the Bible. They made a few remarks, far from complimentary, and were going away, when Vicars placed his hand upon the book, said, in decisive tones, 'Henceforth, these writings are my "colors."'