

PREFACE.

THE vows of God are on me, I must tell
To others how He doeth all things well ;
For He hath taught me on a certain line,
And said, "To others you must be a sign,
For all those things through which I've made you pass
Contain some lesson suited to each class ;
The poor, the sick, the tempted, and the tried,
To show them all how richly I provide,
And how I watch o'er all their interests here,
That they may learn to trust Me without fear."

I cannot say as some before have said,
That by my friends I was solicited
To write. No, no one but my gracious Lord
Inspired or helped me by a single word ;
With Him alone for Counsellor and Guide,
At His command I have myself applied
Unto the work my hands have found to do ;
Had I been prompt I'd long ago been through,
But oh, the task seemed so beyond my sphere
That I've delayed the work from year to year,
And now ten years have nearly passed and gone
Since first in weakness was this work begun.

But as a building gains by each brick laid,
So line by line this book, though long delayed,
Draws to a close, so doth my life's short day.
Soon shall I drop my pen, lay books away,
School will be out, and I shall homeward hie
To join my friends in the "Sweet by and bye" ;
Nor will I count my life itself too dear,
May I with joy but finish my career,
And leave a record of God's love and power
To cheer His children in the trying hour.