

A MAN
SENT OF GOD

Merle McClurkan Heath

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The Life of J. O. McClurkan

By

Merle McClurkan Heath

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TO
MY MOTHER

FOREWORD

Rev. J. O. McClurkan, the subject of this sketch, was easily accessible, notwithstanding the many demands upon his time. That is how it came about that I, a novice in the field of holiness evangelism, in the autumn of 1904 sat facing this sane and saintly man in his office at the Bible School in Nashville, Tennessee.

Taking advantage of his great courtesy, I said, "Brother McClurkan, some say you are a Calvinist. Is there any ground for such a report?"

Undisturbed by my report of rumors, he quietly replied, "I work as though I might fall, but I rest as though I cannot fall."

Brother McClurkan and his helpers had just opened a tent meeting in a new section of the city of Nashville. And, incidentally, Brother McClurkan seldom went anywhere unattended. He said he needed his helpers, and that uninterested people were attracted by a company as they could not be by an unattended individual. I was invited to attend the service. Sensing that I was amazed at the casual nature of the service, on the street-car returning to the Bible School, Brother McClurkan said, "You are accustomed to high-pressure meetings, and our low-pressure meeting tonight did not impress you. But we are in a new community out there, and any appearance of rashness would defeat our purpose. But we will put on more pressure when the people become accustomed to us, and we will have a revival and will establish a mission out there."

There was an assurance in his attitude that made me inwardly marvel. Later I made inquiry, and found that they did have a revival in the tent before it was over, and one of our Nashville churches is a monument to the faith and good judgment of this man of God.

J. O. McClurkan was essentially a pioneer, and the story of his life is the story of a man, rather than the

annals of a movement. But the story is more helpful for its personal characteristics. Even during his life, Brother McClurkan's greatness was indefinable. As a preacher, he sought to garb the profundity of truth in a simplicity of statement. As a teacher he was more than an instructor. He was a counselor as well. As a leader, he was unassuming and fair, never heady and determined. Those who sat at his feet did so unconsciously. His table was round in that there was no distinction in rank among those who sat with him. And now that the story of his life is to appear in print, I know readers will share in that friendly atmosphere which is always there when McClurkan is there, and we shall all turn from the book thinking of how simple it is to be good and great, rather than with the idea that here is a man whose heritage is in the high hills out of our reach.

Here is a book that many will welcome because they knew the man in the days of his flesh. But the ones who need the book most were not here when Brother McClurkan was here. To these I especially address an appeal to "take this book and read it." Read it for the information it contains. Read it for the historic element it possesses. But read it especially for the inspiration it will afford. The book will not make you want to be "another McClurkan." This is the very thing its subject would forbid. But it will make you want to be your own best self. And it will make you want to spend and be spent for others.

I shall account it a joyful occupation and a useful service to do all I can to give this story of the life of J. O. McClurkan a wide circulation and encourage a careful and repeated reading. May the pages of this book be indeed "leaves from the tree of life" to the multitudes!

In grateful memory and everlasting hope,

JAMES B. CHAPMAN

General Superintendent, Church of the Nazarene

CHAPTER I

GOD-CALLED

Father's life had a good beginning. He was born in a preacher's home. His personality was flavored with the rich rare seasonings which only a Christian heritage can impart. That he was born during the first year of the War Between the States, November 13, 1861, presages the hardships in which his youth was cast. For he was a son of the old South, having been born in Tennessee, about sixty miles southwest of Nashville, in Houston County, near the small town of Erin.

The state of Tennessee was hard pressed by the war. Next to Virginia it was the most active theater of operations where 300,000 Union soldiers were on the march or were camped within its borders. Two of the great armies of the North were named from its rivers—the Army of Tennessee, and the Army of the Cumberland. And on her soil some of the bloodiest and most decisive battles of the war were fought.

Difficult as these years were for every Southerner, yet Father made little reference to this segment of his life. There was not one personal illustration, as I recall, in all the sermons which he preached, growing out of the war nor the trying period of reconstruction which followed. He may have been too young to remember. I think not. The secret of his silence lay in the fact, I believe, that he discovered as we did, by happy experience, that there is a quality of life, a spirit in a God-called preacher's home, a communicable faith which acts as a healthy therapeutic in times of stress and strain to the plastic minds of little children who call it home. So

when Father spoke of his childhood as being poor it was that he might say how rich it was in spiritual suggestions.

Father carried a happy picture of his boyhood home indelibly blueprinted upon his heart. There it stood in the Yellow Creek community, a simple country farmhouse built of logs overlaid with clapboard, clinging stubbornly to the rocky soil of a farm which rippled southward into stretches of rolling hills from which Grandfather and the family dug their living. There it stood in his memory, always, a house of welcome and a place of prayer to any who needed its shelter or its comfort. The young were drawn to the congenial atmosphere of the old-fashioned friendly parlor for their social gatherings, and history as sparkling as the cool water which gushed out of the hillside was made at the spring close by.

Around its hospitable board in the log kitchen, which stood some distance from the house, gathered ministers of all denominations. Father remembered from almost infancy their earnest conversations, and the truths of God which he heard at this early age left a profound impression upon him.

The family room was the place of prayer. Grandfather's split-bottom chair stood by the front window. His Bible lay close by on the window sill. In the evenings, when the boys had come in from the fields and Grandmother and the girls had done up the supper dishes, the candle was lighted in the window, and the family assembled for family prayers. Grandfather was a good reader. The scripture fell from his lips with understanding. But to make *sure*, he punctuated his reading with brief explanations. Then he prayed. Every knee old enough touched the floor as father and mother and thirteen children bowed around a huge fireplace in whose depths backlogs smoldered warmly in winter.

Grandfather prayed as those old-time preachers knew how to pray. He believed the Bible and prayed its love and its judgments into the consciousness of his children. Is it any wonder that Father went from that home with the affirmatives of life and faith implanted within him! It is not surprising that it became the habit of his life never to emphasize the negatives—never to vocalize the difficulties. Not that he did not heed them. He did. He considered them well either as “checks” interposed by Providence or as mountains to be moved. His usual procedure, in adult life, was to request Mother to join him in making the problem a special subject of prayer, with the result that often the answer came to her before he felt clear, as he expressed it. And if so, he accepted her answer as his answer, too. For he was familiar with Mother’s method of prayer and leaned heavily upon it. Too often he had seen her go boldly to a throne of grace and tarry there until the nagging negative was dimmed out in the light of the blessed affirmative of God’s will.

To understand many of Father’s characteristic traits is to know more of his parentage. His father, John McClurkan, was an itinerant preacher in the pioneer days of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Tennessee, having come to Tennessee from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where his father had settled upon their arrival in America from Scotland. He was a godly man, versatile, a scholar in his day, and held in high esteem by his synod.

Father inherited much from him and absorbed more. For Grandfather not only carried the gospel on horseback far beyond the boundaries of the Yellow Creek community but he was the country schoolmaster as well. He was the solid link between the church and the school. Old Bethany, which was the meetinghouse on Sunday, became the schoolroom on Monday. Grandfather taught in a day when the King James Version of the Bible was

at once primer and advanced reader. It was always present in the schoolroom. Its great passages were read at the morning exercises, its chapters committed to memory. Yet his son lived to decry the day when the Book upon whose principles a young America had built, under God, a great democracy, was shelved in part by the free institutions of which it was the cornerstone.

In a day when books were scarce and difficult to obtain, Grandfather had accumulated a small but well-chosen library. These were the books which Father read by the light of a candle or, crouched on the hearth, he read by the glowing embers until far into the night. He carried his Latin grammar in his pocket as he plowed in the field and studied it while he rested his mule at the end of the furrow.

Grandfather's library gave him that *scent* for books which characterized him. Father once said to his son that the first line of a book often determined for him whether the book was truth or trash. He read much after the fashion of a threshing machine, his quick eye expertly separating the wheat from the chaff. His sermons and his writings reflected his voluminous reading, abounding, as they did, in quotations from biography, excerpts from books of history and travel.

It was this library of Grandfather's which laid for Father a foundation of an education beyond the limitations of the log schoolhouse, and implanted within him the rudiments of a theology which, if too sternly Calvinistic, he tempered in later years with the whosoever-willness of the Arminian doctrine. He said that between the two dominant theories there is a meeting place. And he lived and taught at that level.

The basic tenet of Calvinism, however, was imbedded in him like granite. The sovereignty of God! This conflicted in no way in his thinking with the free moral agency of man. Like Isaiah he saw God high and lifted

up before whom he walked most humbly, and with whom he communed reverently. Indeed communion with God became the habit of his life. Prayer flowed through him like breath. Yet he took no liberties with God in language. His speech when talking with his Father was language becoming a child of the King.

His mother, Cora Paty McClurkan, was a refreshing personality. Preacher's wife though she was, and inured to hardship, yet she escaped the mold of domesticity. She took the housekeeping with a pinch of leniency, giving her thirteen children much the run of the place. She had a way of escape when the noise and confusion reached a certain pitch. Picking up her endless sewing or a basket of darning, she sewed and sang lustily, if tunelessly, the great old hymns of the church, giving to the last word of each stanza a rolling, drumbeat emphasis. The older children and guardian angels looked after the little ones while Grandmother thus sang. Perhaps the potatoes burned. What of it! The price was worth the pleasure.

The hidden spring of Grandmother's life was a real experience of grace. While Grandfather traveled the circuit on Sunday she saddled her horse and took the children to Martha's Chapel or to Bethany, one before and one behind until the family outgrew the horse's back. Then she bedded the children down in the farm wagon and, riding high on the spring seat, she drove the family to the house of God. Thus she brought her children up in the fear and love of God and did a good job by all thirteen of them, giving to the church four preacher sons, Will and James, Christopher and Newton.

Grandmother's children loved her, especially Father, who, since he was a frail child, spent so many hours in her presence helping her in the kitchen, binding straw into brooms, and sweeping yards, or pillowed on her soft bosom in hours of illness. As long as she lived there was the closest attachment between her and this second

son of hers. Father reflected much of her personality. To his dying day he was never quite sure where his hat was. And if he had not had Mother to tie his black or white string tie, that important feature of a man's attire would have gone neglected. He just did not know how.

Mother's methodical, well-ordered way of doing things, so unlike his mother's, often got in the path of Father's swift-moving plans. Take funerals, for instance. Father had so many of them—funerals of friends and strangers, of rich and poor, all creeds and no creeds, outcasts, prostitutes, the nameless ones. He had no relish for funerals. He called a grave what in reality it is, a "hole in the ground," and shrank from it with even more than the natural repugnance of a man with a zest for life. Funerals were to him a means of service, an avenue along which he might lead the living to God. So he served them well. He often said that the minister who stands between the people and the altar should be a man of great compassion. He was. He gave to people in trouble an understanding sympathy which drew them to him. His funeral messages were never long. "Obituaries in the Bible," he pointed out to young preachers, "were noticeably brief."

The funeral parlors had a way of sending a cab for Father somewhat ahead of time. It arrived so often just as Mother was about ready to serve the midday meal. Now if there was one thing Mother insisted upon, it was a well-prepared, well-ordered meal. But she did not always have it so, for Father would take an expectant glance out the window, and there it was, the cab in all its black shining beauty, the negro driver sitting on the driver's seat. Swift as wind Father was in the kitchen, the tails of his Prince Albert flipping behind him, and before Mother could interfere, he was dishing up in his awkward way the very heart of her steaming dinner, much to her dismay but to the grinning satisfaction of the cab driver, his friend and colored brother. Father

could relish his dinner so much more now that he had fed the cabman who was patiently to outsit Mother's slow motion.

There was within Father a quick response to the call of duty. He had no patience with Pharaoh who, with frogs everywhere and in everything, put off letting the children of Israel go until *tomorrow*. His grandfather, Hugh McClurkan, was like that, too. This grandfather was a full-blooded Scotchman and spoke with a brogue which well might be the envy of some preachers whom I have known to assume it. He was a unique character indeed. He made no vocal profession of religion, nor affiliated with any church, yet Father never doubted that in some peculiar way satisfying to his eccentric nature he was a Christian.

His grandfather's mission was a difficult one and strange. He went far and near to families in trouble—husband and wife at cross purposes, domestic quarrels, homes about to go on the rocks. He had the gift of bringing harmony. So much so that he became known as the Peacemaker.

His very pronounced trait of character, that of obeying an impulse to duty immediately, he bequeathed to Father in a measure. He performed a duty without parleying or questioning. He did not take time to get ready. He just started out. Obeying such an urge at one time, he left for New York on foot without turning back for his hat. Now that was a day when going to New York was an achievement in itself, and a man without a hat was an unheard of curiosity.

Upon occasion Father was as eccentric as was his grandfather in obeying the call of duty. In the early years of marriage, Mother and Father lived in Texas. One day Mother was going about her household duties as usual and had on the stove a savory fat hen cooking for dinner, when Father rushed in on his way, mind you, to

California. He stopped by the house to pick up Mother much as a train hesitates at its first station.

"California," gasped Mother, "why, I'm not ready to go anywhere, and besides," she added enticingly, "I have a chicken roasting for your dinner."

The appeal was hopeless. Mother discerned that far-away look in Father's eye which told that, like his grandfather, his mind and soul were on the way. So she made hasty preparation for travel. Reaching the door at length, she was horrified to see Father marching on ahead, the heavy grip in one hand, the pot of roasting chicken in the other.

There is a story we enjoy telling, because it is so reminiscent of Father and, too, since it held such dire consequences for my older sister. Ethel was a beautiful girl. She had reached those dawning years when a girl wants to look her loveliest. Father arrived home with the familiar announcement that he had received an urgent call to some distant destination.

"To arrive on time," he explained, "we would have to leave immediately."

Ethel received this news with a new eagerness, for she saw in it an occasion to array herself in the simple but pretty dresses which Mother's talented needle had fashioned. The obstacle to this hurried exodus, however, was the fact that the family wash was out on the lines, an item to be considered when packing up four children for a ten-day sojourn. Father solved it easily. While Mother struggled with the more immediate details, he gathered in the clothes off the lines and packed them down in the valises in all their dripping wetness.

We arrived on time, but when Mother opened those valises she was nearly overcome with the smell of soured starch. Resourceful as she was, she never quite overcame that stubborn odor. And Ethel, conscious of it, hung back on the edges of that campmeeting, ironed

and pleated and ruffled, emitting a strange perfume never planned in her happy imaginings.

A few years ago I passed through the site of that revival. When I saw the marker on the highway, the consciousness of the net results of that meeting swept over me, and I knew that Ethel, so much like her father in vision and spirit, had long since realized, as she never could have done in adolescent years, that the lives of godly men and women coming out of that revival were worth far more than the painful investment of soured clothes and blasted hopes which she put into it.

Father's conversion at the age of thirteen should be the voice of encouragement to any discouraged Sunday-school teacher. It was like this. The revival season was on, following as it always did in that community, wheat threshing time. Those were busy days for the ladies of old Bethany Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Hams cooking, stacked apple pies, pound cake and corn meal light bread baking, filled the kitchens with a sweet aroma in preparation for the dinners which would be spread on the ground out under the trees in the church yard. The log church was swept and clean. Sweet-smelling hay from the wheat fields had been scattered semicircle in front of the pulpit on which penitent sinners might kneel and seek pardoning grace. Old Brother Jim Parrish, the man of God who for long years had been pastor of Bethany Church, had seen great things happen in that pile of straw. So he had reason to expect the workings of God in the hearts of the people at the revival season. The fresh new hay was the outward expression of his faith as well as an unspoken invitation to sinners.

Father was a constant seeker during this revival meeting on that hay-carpeted floor, riding horseback behind his mother day after day to attend. He was a timid child. He had longed to become a Christian, yet

he had never sought God openly because he shrank from doing those things which brought him into public notice.

The last service of the meeting had been dismissed. You could hear, above the restless feet of horses in the road and the grind of steel-rimmed wheels on the gravel, the happy voices of friends and neighbors as they reluctantly drove away to their widely separated homes.

But the revival was not over for God and a boy who still knelt in the straw. Nor for the pastor and the boy's Sunday-school teacher, who lingered prayerfully with him, encouraging him, instructing him. They were faithful to him in his youth and obscurity, little dreaming that a great soul winner was then being born into the family of God, one whose pen and influence were to reach across the seas. His conversion came as quietly as the breaking of the day with all the beauty and freshness and wonder of the dawn. When he walked out of that almost deserted church, he said that he walked into a new world, a world bathed in the glory of God.

"The stars," he said, "shone with a new luster. I had never seen the moon so brilliant. The atmosphere seemed charged with a fragrant aroma. The darkness was light. 'Behold, all things had become new.'"

Father, though young, must have felt deeply the need of this regenerating experience, for it is reflected in an old Bible of his where on the margin opposite a verse in the Psalms which reads, "Forgive the sins of my youth," he has written the simple but fervent petition, "Grant it, Lord."

Even before his conversion, Father felt the call of God upon his life. He described his call to the ministry as an inner urge, a conviction—the voice of God in his heart which never left him. After his conversion he

lived his Christian life in his home, at school, and among his companions until at the age of seventeen he came into the noontide splendor of his call. Grandfather was the instrument of his response to the divine urgency.

It came about naturally. Grandfather and his son Jim were congenial spirits. They spent much time together. They conversed freely, without restraint, upon many and varied topics. Father confided in him his dreams and aspirations. So it became a familiar sight to see father and son mount the gray horses on Saturdays and ride off down the country roads to Grandfather's Sunday appointments.

Thus it was as they were riding along one day, resting their horses in the shade of sycamore trees, or halting midstream to let them drink of the waters of Yellow Creek as it flowed cool and swift over its gravel bed, that Grandfather spoke.

"Jim," he said, "I will preach at the morning service. You will preach at night."

Simple words, quietly spoken, but at the sound of them a door swung open, noiselessly, as if the hinges had been anointed with the oil of preparation. And Father stood there upon the threshold of his life's work, young and timid, awed, and looked into the face of a world's need, its sin and sorrow—the field to which he gave his life and his all in sublime dedication.

CHAPTER II

GOD-EMPOWERED

Father learned to preach by preaching, just as he learned to pray by praying and to win souls by winning them. He made some blunders, surely he did, but he was willing to try, anyway. And in trying, he stumbled upon *something*, something vital and vibrant, yet so commonplace that it easily might have been taken for granted. The quickening thing which Father found was a method of education. To *learn by doing*. By this method he not only pushed out the stakes of his own life beyond his dreaming, but it became in his hand a powerful instrument in shaping the otherwise lives of many men and women into vessels of honor and service. So Father preached and learned. He put to use those proven ways which his sponge-like mind had absorbed from his father—attitudes that spell the difference in preachers, whether they are ministers by profession only, or fishers of men who hook their fish.

Likewise the storehouse of information, which had flowed into the cisterns of his memory from the pages of his father's library, bubbled up and escaped his lips in forms and shapes, which only the beauty of language can give to thought. In this way a bulk of Father's sermon material was born, and like birth, it was a new and continuous process throughout life. Not the shining shaft of spiritual truth, *the sermon*, that flash of illumination, which was given to Father after intimate conversation with his God and found expression in the divine texts of *The Book*, but those winding avenues of human life and history, which, while they seemed to divert the mind

of the congregation into oases of mental relaxation, laughter, and tears, were in truth spotlighting the central shaft so that the refreshed mind, turning to look at it again, would see truth in its grandeur and sublimity through the eyes of human experience.

Certainly in ways like this the providence of God played upon his life in the everydayness of his preparation. As yet he had had no specific training, yet to these years of youth can be traced the roots which were to yield the flower of his service. Here we find those channels over which the love of God was to spill in blessed abandon and power—his capacity for God, his affinity for truth, his love of man, and his dedication to service.

While Father was hammering away on his own anvil in the school of experience, free but priceless as it is, there was within him a gnawing desire, like hunger, to go to college. He might have yearned for the grass that grows greener over the hill, but he did not. He seized the opportunity which was close at hand, and managed somehow to enter Cloverdale College in the town of Cloverdale, Tennessee. Now, Cloverdale was to the Yellow Creek mind the epitome of learning—Brussels! Prague!—to which the well-to-do squires sent their sons and daughters for a touch of that mystic thing called higher education. Father did not tarry there for long. If you had known him, you would know why. He was not cut to fashion's pattern. Besides, he disagreed with the head master on certain points of thesis. He did not intend to repeat by rote statements which he knew to be false. So the next year found him enrolled in Tucuna College, a Presbyterian institution in Tucuna, Texas, for his theological training, at the age of twenty.

Father had flown the coop. Texas has always been Texas, but its vastness had greater reaches, more of the boots and saddle to it, and certainly Texas was a far greater distance from Tennessee then than now. No,

going away to college was not the casual incident in Father's life that the mere telling might imply. On the contrary, it was the wrench which tore him loose from his provincial moorings and set his feet upon the highways of a continent. This was the initial step, although he was unconscious of the full import of its meaning. He was just a boy who, after all, had never been far beyond the borders of his own county. No wonder he was filled with all the mingled emotions of eagerness and temerity natural to a country boy about to set out on his first extended journey! He told it on himself, however, how he carried his black tin trunk and deposited it safely in the baggage car, so unaccustomed was he to the ways of travel. It made him feel more at ease knowing that this hunk of home was following him for sure into his new and untried world. When the train on which he was making this momentous journey was being ferried across the Mississippi River, so determined was he that no incumbrances should interfere with his wholehearted delight in the surging, swirling details of this adventure that he tossed his coat unsuspectingly on a peg which protruded conveniently from the wall of the ferry. Why not? All his life he had hung his coat on the peg in the familiar hall at home. When Father got around to thinking about his coat again, he was utterly amazed to find it gone.

One of Father's rare qualities was the fact that he never lost this amazement at sin. Sin always surprised and perplexed him even as the years unrolled and he came to minister to so much of it in the lives of so many people—misery and crime and degradation. You see, the secret of it was that Father was never looking for *sin*. He was looking for the *sinner*, and the peculiarity of his vision was such that he saw beyond the sin straight into the sinner's heart and beheld there a soul worth saving, a son of God in the making.

Take Findley X, for instance. The first time Father saw Findley his liquor had him down. The best he could do was to loll and wallow in the gutter off the fringe of a crowd which had gathered under a sputtering street light on a street corner in the red light district of the city. It was a sticky night. Hot! The air was foul with the evil breath of the place. Yet the crowd stood there, men and women alike, their feet hesitating in their evil purpose—held there by the story Father was telling—the story of a lost sheep. . . .

“Lost sheep! Lost sheep!” The words beat against Findley’s stupored brain like hammers.

A sheep lost in the wilds and fastnesses of the mountains, storm-swept and desolate. . . .

“Jesus Christ,” moaned Findley.

And of a Shepherd who for love of the sheep dared the dangers and the darkness, the violence of the mountain to find it. . . .

“Love. . . O my God. . . Who said anything about love!” cried Findley as he staggered, sobering, to his feet and made his way through the crowd to Father.

“His way won men to Christ,” wrote Findley some twenty years later from the study of his great church in the East. “It made an impact upon them that they never forgot. To this good day I keep his picture on my desk and find myself gazing again into those kindly eyes whose depths of love were the cords which drew me to my Saviour.”

When Father preached from the text, “Satan hath desired thee that he might sift thee as wheat,” he was speaking from the deeps of his own wretched experience. Before the close of his first year in college, illness overwhelmed him, an illness which left in his already delicate body a frailty with which he wrestled to the end of his life and made him kin in understanding and sympathy to all who suffered.

"Surely," as Father expressed it, "the Master would have all the chaff eliminated, that in the great day of reward nothing might be left but the golden grain."

He was compelled to return to his home for rest and recuperation. Now, the community which loved him and had expected great things of him, predicted the end of what might have been for Jim McClurkan. But the homefolks lived to laugh at their ominous prophesyings and to rejoice in the fullness of grace which Father was to unveil to them in due time.

When Tucuna opened the next year Father was there. This time he was not alone. He had salvaged from that illness just the interlude he needed to win the only girl he ever loved, the girl who was to be the beloved companion of the years; whose life fused with his was to become an added source of power to his ministry.

Father was married to Martha Frances Rye on November 15, 1882, in her father's home known to the Yellow Creek community as the old Nesbitt place.

"I'm tellin' you, Frances, Jim McClurkan won't live a year," was the stern blessing that her father, Tom Rye, pronounced upon her.

"Then you will be bringing home a young 'un for me and your ma to raise."

Grandfather Rye was a hard man, plenty of grit in him. Handsome, you might say, with his waving black hair and a splendid body hardened and tanned by the sun and wind of the fields. Mother was the image of him. At his words her dark eyes flashed, the angry color mounted the thin fair skin of her face until the roots of her hair bristled, and stung and burned.

"I'll show him," she stubbornly purposed in her heart. "If anything happens to Jimmie, I'll paddle my own canoe."

Father had memories, too. Much of the impedimenta of one's wedding day is lost in the excitement of the happy occasion. This incident, however, Father remembered always. When he and Mother boarded the train for their future home in Texas, there ahead of them was Father's devoted family, his father, mother, and unmarried brothers and sisters who, acting upon a quick decision, one from which they never turned and which they never regretted, had sold home and farm, everything, to cast their lot with him in Texas.

Father believed "we never know the fullness of God until we undertake the impossible."

The next few years in Texas proved to be the outworking of his belief. He was sorely plagued in his body by a recurring exhaustion and continually sought in change of activity the rest he so much needed. Tossed like a wave, sometimes he was studying at Tucuna, or teaching school in some Texas town, evangelizing, or working on a newspaper. "Broken on the Potter's wheel," you say. Or was he?

These were lean years financially for Father and Mother. It did not matter much. They could not miss that which they had not set their hearts upon—money. Father was one man who could look money straight in the dollar mark and walk away in his right mind, neither hypnotized by the power of it nor the greed for it. Therefore he estimated it rightly, as a *servant*, a tool and tong to be used by man in building the kingdom of God on earth. When it did come to pass that large sums of money came into his hands for his work he used it as a sculptor does his chisel to carve upon the stony heart of man the face of Christ. He sent it swiftly into the gaping need of humanity, so swiftly that no stain of rust had time to accumulate upon it—food and coal for the poor, a chapel in India, medical supplies for a mission in Africa.

Father was like that. His own pocketbook was the Good Samaritan's purse. A load of groceries was sure to be delivered to the correct address after he had visited in some poverty-stricken home where there was illness or where death stalked. An aged minister told me recently an incident about Father, interesting because so many could tell the same story. He said that when he was a young preacher, just starting out, on a small income with a growing family to support, that Father met him one day at the Union Station in a southern city, and just as he was boarding the train Father gave him a hearty handshake, turned quickly, and was gone, leaving in the palm of his hand a folded bill.

Mother's influence was a sustaining as well as a practical one. She kept an eye on Father. She had to, to keep him from giving away almost everything they had. Perchance Mother would come in from some afternoon meeting at the church and would go to the kitchen to prepare supper.

"Why, Jimmie," Mother would call back to Father after a few moments of investigation, "I was certain that we had butter for supper."

Whereupon Father would follow Mother to the kitchen door with a sheepish look on his face.

"Don't tell me, Jimmie, that you have given away all the butter," Mother would admonish suspectingly.

If only Father could get by without letting his left hand know what his right hand did! For that was his firm belief, but he never could figure out a way to get by Mother.

So he confessed, "Mamma, you remember old Mrs. Grundy, don't you? I dropped in to see about her today and she hasn't had a piece of butter for weeks. I thought we could get along somehow. . . . Couldn't you just warm up the gravy left from dinner?" he would add helpfully.

Mother was a good financier. She was born that way. She had learned the hard way to do much with little, a lesson she has not forgotten to this good day. Give her a plain old goods box in those early days and plenty of time, and the net result would be a very acceptable washstand. All such ingenious devices she brought to bear upon the meagerly furnished manse, in Decatur, Texas, where Father accepted his first pastorate as minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, at the age of twenty-five. Here a great truth was made manifest to him in experience, a truth which was to undergird him in many difficult undertakings. Let Father say it for you, "Every call of God carries with it the divine enablings."

He brought to his new task his own idea of success, which had its meaning struck deep in the gospel of our Lord, defining itself in selfless service to his people. No wonder Father found himself here, and the Presbytery discovered in Father the buddings of leadership, a gift for organization, and a young preacher in whose sermons the flame of evangelism burned. He remained in Decatur for two years. His ministry at that place was dramatically concluded when he announced to Mother one day unexpectedly, "I feel in my soul a profound conviction to go to California." He went, almost immediately, putting into action his thought that each moment has a moral quality.

The trip westward became for Father the road of spiritual destiny, leading as it did to the secret of *power* in the Christian's life. He located in the San Joachin Valley, that lush valley which flows with the river coastward to the Golden Gate, a valley ripe with luscious fruit, flinging the flame of apricot, deep purple of grape, and rich, red cherry against the verdure of the valley. He served a pastorate at Visalia, then at Selma, and from there he was appointed synodical evangelist. Mother,

who is so worthy to testify, bears witness to the fact that these early pastorates, both in Texas and California, interrupted as they continued to be by periods of physical distress, were like continuing revivals.

"I could see no difference," she said. "The altar was thrown open at the regular services, and people were converted and grew up into the sturdy new growth of the church."

Father had now come to be recognized by his denomination as a builder, a healthy dose for any rundown ecclesiastical condition. For this reason he was asked by his synod to go to San Jose, the town which had once been the capital of the state, to see what could be done with a deserted, locked-up church which at one time had been a thriving center of religious life. Father arrived with ideas. He had both a plan and a method. So he rolled up his clerical cuffs and went to work at it—a good way to begin any success story. Father happened to have a good friend living in San Jose. Right there is where he began, gathering up the names of each family living in the block where his friend resided. Armed with this information, he started out, and when he finished he had visited in each home in that block and had invited everybody not affiliated with any church into his congregation. Besides, he had the names of all families in the next block, and tackled that. After this fashion he covered the city of San Jose, visiting rich and poor alike. He visited the good and the bad—publicans and sinners whom the average minister, somehow, manages to shun. The result was that twice in two years he had enlarged his prayer meeting room, had it going on double boiler schedule, so to speak, and had built up the most active young people's work in the city. He had, with planned intent, placed his finger on the two most vital spots in a church, the

central powerhouse and the life line. It is not surprising that ere long the church was filled to capacity on Sundays.

This house-to-house ministry, which bore such splendid fruitage in San Jose, was a phase of personal evangelism so uniquely his own that somewhere down the years it came to be called Father's "doorstep ministry." It was far more than the present-day church canvass. It took more into account than the mere counting of noses. Indeed, it was the heartbeat of his ministry, the warm personal touch which reached out to people and spanned the gulf between them and the church, the bridge over which they found their way to the house of God.

Father had a winsome way of meeting people, as if they were glad to see him. They generally were. His visits were usually short, but long enough. They were never professional. His brotherly presence unlocked the pent-up sorrows and problems of people so that their grievances spattered all over him, giving them release and Father a chance to pray. He learned to pray a prayer so brief, "thumbnail prayers," he called them, short, terse, heartfelt petitions that drove straight to the core of the need without allowing time for extraneous circumstances to break in upon the privacy of the moment. So that, if need be, he could pray with busy people—women whose bread was in the oven, men at their desks, people on crowded thoroughfares, without attracting the gaze of the curious.

There is a pen picture of Father drawn from those years in California which I want you to see with me, since it shows the technique of his "doorstep ministry" in a tough spot. Father had been called to Porterville, California, to conduct a revival. This section was a newly settled country at that time and there were few religious advantages in the place. Revivals were not the most popular brand of entertainment in Porterville just then. This situation was exactly Father's meat. He

preached in the mornings and at night. The afternoons he gave to house-to-house visitation, stopping at the gate or on the doorstep of the houses just long enough to say a word of greeting and invite the people to the revival. One afternoon he was directed to a house where, he had been told, a widow with a houseful of little children lived. Father knocked on the door.

"Get out of here! What the —— do you want anyway?" the woman yelled, without budging a step toward the door.

Father felt as if he had been hit with a pitched ball. However, he was not defeated. That woman needed religion if anybody in that town did and he was going to do something about it. He took one of the few Christians in the town into his confidence and planned a little strategy.

"You call upon her one day," Father explained, "and I will call the next, day after day, until we get her to the meeting."

So they did. And so did she.

"Each night," Father reported, "the woman moved one seat nearer the front."

The next day he or his friend was right back at her door with a word of encouragement. Before the revival was over she was genuinely converted. A day or so afterward, Father chanced to meet one of the new convert's children on the street.

"How is your mother?" Father inquired of the little girl with unfeigned interest.

"Oh, sir," the child exclaimed excitedly, "*something* has happened to Mom. She hasn't swore for two days."

If Father could speak today he might give the perplexed preachers a point or two on how to get the people into their churches as the ministers discuss this threadbare subject in the modern Monday morning preachers'

meeting. He would say to them, no doubt, "Keep in close personal touch with the masses. Visit the people. Search out the individual. Go to the most neglected. Go to the people wherever they may be found. Ditch, if need be, some of the demands of the machinery of a top-heavy organization to do so, and see your congregations grow."

San Jose was pivotal in Father's career. He not only did an outstanding piece of work there, but it was the threshold to a new world. The "upper room" was awaiting him. The door was already ajar.

Often it is the little everyday happenings that lead our feet to an unexpected summit where we catch a panoramic view of the greatness and beauty of our universe and something of the vast power that is behind and in it. In just this everyday way Mother was leaving the church one day when a friend detained her on the steps long enough to inquire if she had attended the meeting which was being held at the Methodist Church. Mother, whose life was already filled to the brim with her family and her own church program, had not so much as heard of this meeting.

"I wish you *could* find time to attend, Mrs. McClurkan. Dr. Carradine's sermons are different, and the experience he is preaching about I find so deeply satisfying."

Here the woman's hands fluttered and lay on her breast motionless in symbol of an inner "peace that passeth all understanding."

Mother often told us that as she stood there listening to this woman she felt as if she were looking into a pool of clear, cool water. Then she was thirsty, thirsty for something she did not have, thirsty for something she knew not what. All at once she realized that her one desire was to attend this meeting. She and Father made plans to go that night. There was so much for Mother to do to accomplish this, as she had four

children, two of them twins at that, to be provided for. At last everything was in readiness and she happily awaited Father's arrival. The time for the service approached. And passed! When Father did arrive at the manse at a late hour he found Mother in tears. The fact that a man had come to his office in great trouble and had pushed all remembrance of the meeting out of his mind, was little comfort to her in her disappointment. They arrived on time the next night. Father saw to that, and they were never the same people again.

The woman was right. The sermon was different, different from anything they had heard before. The evangelist preached about an experience that awaits the believing Christian, an experience of cleansing that deals with the root of sin in the heart, which he called the carnal nature. He identified it as that disturbing element in the Christian life which he likened to a thread or a cordlike connection between the soul and the world, although the two have drifted far apart.

"This carnal nature," Dr. Carradine went on to explain, "is a middle ground, a strange medium upon which Satan can and does operate, to the inward distress of the child of God whose heart, at the same time, is loyal to his Saviour."

"This work," he went on to say, "is wrought in the heart of the Christian by the mighty working power of the Holy Spirit in his cleansing, baptizing, and infilling power."

The language of the preacher here consists of words connoting *fire*—cleansing! purifying! consuming! illuminating! empowering! Strong words which drove the minds of the listeners back down the centuries to a day in Jerusalem when with the sound of a mighty rushing wind tongues of fire rested upon the disciples in an experience called Pentecost.

Dr. Carradine named this experience "sanctification," and said that it is obtainable now, not at death; instantaneously, through consecration and faith. He laid his foundation deep in the Scriptures, quoting from both the Old and the New Testaments. He drew the people's attention especially to the last commanding promise of Jesus as He spoke His parting words to a group of perplexed and fearful disciples only moments before His ascension.

"'Wait,'" were his words, "'for the promise of the Father and ye shall receive power.'

"'For,'" quoting Peter, who a few days later had come into the electrifying experience of which Jesus spoke, "'the promise is unto you and to your children, and to as many as are afar off.'"

Father was interested. Mother was quick to discern that. She knew Father. How deeply spiritual he was, that the hart that panted after the water-brooks was indeed he. Suddenly her fears were aroused. Could this thing be fanaticism? Would it hinder Father's already useful ministry? With these thoughts pounding in her mind she seized upon an invitation, which came in the nick of time, for the family to visit a close friend who lived in a neighboring town.

Father would enjoy that, she persuaded herself. The rest! The fellowship of kindred minds! And, too, he would be removed from this threatened danger.

Mother scuttled us off so quickly that we scarcely knew what was happening. But nobody was happy. Least of all, Mother. She understood the faraway look in Father's eyes, and felt responsible for the fleeting glimpses of unhappiness she saw there.

Father was restless. He stood it as long as he could. Then he arose abruptly, and to the consternation of his hostess, good friend that she was, he announced

quietly but firmly that he was catching an afternoon train which would get him into San Jose in time for the night service at the Methodist Church. At the sound of Father's words a mountain of guilt slipped off Mother's heart and she was almost gay as she answered hastily, "I'll go with you, Jimmie. We will all go."

Father was at the altar that night. The fact that he was a successful pastor of one of the city's churches did not hold him back.

"If there is anything more that God has in store for me, I want it."

So he sought the experience of sanctification earnestly and prayerfully. Then one night he arose from the altar and made the brief and simple statement that he accepted the blessing of sanctification for himself by faith.

"There is no feeling," he told Mother, "but I believe the doctrine is scriptural, and I am standing right there on naked faith."

He stood there for days, never doubting the promises of God.

"I believe it is true," he kept saying to every doubt that presented itself.

"I *believe* . . ."—then it happened. The Holy Spirit sealed his faith with such an outpouring of himself that he could scarcely contain the glory. Mother saw him coming. There was an unusual bounce in his naturally quick step. As he came into the house he was praising God in an audible whisper, in a way Mother had not heard before.

"All night long," she said, "he remained in a state of spiritual ecstasy, rejoicing in the blessed witness of the Holy Spirit."

"Hallelujah! Hallelujah!" The nearest Mother ever heard him come to shouting.

"He seemed to be aglow," Mother said, "with a radiance that made me feel black as a ball of pitch."

Mother came into the experience a few days later. Unlike Father, she swept into Canaan on billows of joy, and to this good day the gladness of the experience bubbles up and overflows her ripened soul. But the test came. The meeting had closed. Father was out of town attending Presbytery, and Mother, left alone, found herself in a state of darkness and despair almost beyond expression.

"It was as if Satan had summoned all the powers of darkness to make me doubt this experience of sanctification and to deny it."

But the devil had much to learn from Mother, since he was to challenge her to many spiritual combats. Maybe he foreknew the tower of strength Mother's prayer life was to be. He might as well throw all he had into this initial conquest and, if possible, nip it in the bud. The battle was long and bitter. She could neither eat nor sleep. The struggle was that great.

"Dear Lord," she prayed, "I can die. But I will never doubt what Thou hast done for me."

Just then there was a sound of footsteps in the hallway. Mother looked up to see Father standing in the door.

Running to him she cried, "Oh, what brings you home? Are you sick?"

"No," replied Father, "but I felt so impelled to return home just long enough to bring you this book."

And he handed her a copy of a book entitled *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*. Mother sank down in a chair and began reading. On and on she read, like a fevered child draining a cup of cool water. She came to the chapter on "Temptation," where the author, a saint of God, describes the wily attacks of the devil

and gave her technique for defeating him. Here Mother's soul found relief.

"Peace and joy flowed in like a river," she said, "and the steady stream of faith has never been broken from that day to this."

It is difficult to fit into the framework of words an experience the measure of which was a daily revelation throughout a quarter of a century of subsequent living. Certainly there was a fusion, a oneness of purpose in the work of the Kingdom beyond anything Mother and Father had known before. And Father! A death to self more complete in him than anyone I have ever known, was wrought in his heart by the Holy Spirit. The life he now lived was truly not of himself but of the Son of God. His one purpose, now as never before, was to know Christ, and to do His will on earth, and to bring people everywhere into the knowledge and bounty of God. His service knew no bounds, energized as it was by a holy zeal and enthusiasm which kindled his personality like a hidden flame.

The experience of sanctification dealt a death blow to Father's besetting sin, his temper. Father's temper was an explosive thing, according to Mother, which carried him beyond himself in its fury when it did get out of control, which was not often, thank God. But when it did, it exploded all over everything. Take the prohibition fight in California, for instance, where Father marched in the first torchlight parade. He hated liquor. Ministers like Father have a right to loathe it. They stand by men who are being hanged for crimes committed while they are under the influence of it. They go to families which are broken and wrecked because of it. They throw a life line to men and women who are enslaved by it. They would heave it out of the body politic, if they had their way, just as one would get rid of rattlesnakes, and for the same reason. The

colossal dollar mark that our government writes alongside the revenue which flows into the national treasury from it, when stacked up beside the life of even one boy, would not be worth it, to Father's way of thinking. So he fought with blood in his eye. Righteous indignation could have served as a face-saving explanation for Father's state of mind when the fight was the hottest, had not Mother diagnosed it properly as "just plain mad."

Father angry! That was a new slant for me who had lived all the days of my life with him and had witnessed his amazing calmness under the most trying circumstances. If Father had had a temper like this maybe there would be some reference to it in his writings. I found this in an editorial. That he was speaking out of his own experience, I feel sure.

"We have no right," wrote Father, "to be going through this world with torpedo explosions of temper. If we have such gunpowdery tempers we should go to the Lord for deliverance. Then by walking in the Spirit, maintain a vigilant watchfulness lest it spring upon us again. Our sins," he explained, "have a peculiar affinity for us and even after they have been expelled, may lurk around seeking to re-enter."

In line with this editorial Father had a sermon which he preached from the text, "Sin crouched at the door." I could not hear the text for looking at the powerful cunning tiger poised to spring upon its victim which the words of the text conjured up in my mind. The implication of the scripture, as Father pointed out, was that the sin principle, having been eradicated from the believer's heart by the operation of the Holy Spirit in the work of sanctification, like a ferocious beast crouches close to the heart's portal, waiting, waiting to spring.

He had his own illustration with which he visualized to the congregation the sanctified heart—the heart emptied

of the beastly carnal nature. We always knew when Father was going to preach this sermon because we invariably caught him sneaking two glasses of water into the pulpit before time for the service. And immediately we scampered off to find Father a little clod of dirt to be used as the carnal nature. When Father reached the point in the sermon where he needed this illustration, he reached for one of the glasses of water and, holding it aloft before the people, he dropped the clod of dirt into the water. Everything was fine, the water clean and bright, as long as the little clod of dirt remained unstirred by the trials and temptations of life. But when the neighbor's chickens scratched up the flowers. . . . Father lifted the glass and began stirring with his pencil. When the bread burned. . . . Your good name was slandered. . . . By this time Father had stirred the water into a muddy, swirling eddy like the dark and agitated movements of the uncleansed heart which under the daily pressure of temptation throws off ugly, biting words, fierce temper, sin. Now Father would place this glass of darkish water in a conspicuous place to settle, to cool off, while he stirred the other glass, the heart from dirt set free. Father stirred and stirred. The neighbor's chickens scratched up the flowers. . . . "Praise the Lord, we can plant some more." . . . The bread burned. . . . "Hallelujah!" . . . Somebody slanders your good name. . . .

*Oh, for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free,
A heart that always feels Thy blood,
So freely spilt for me.*

This mighty baptism with the Holy Spirit became life to Father, life more abundant, for he experienced its quickening power not only in his spirit, but at his weakest point, his body. His body, as mentioned earlier, was frail, frail to the end, but it was so vitalized, so energized

by the very life of God that from that day forward he was to suffer, yes, but never again to suffer those periodic interruptions which had punctuated his ministry. Rather, every segment of his life was caught up and held in the strong firm knot of God's will and purpose. Nothing was lost. Nothing was incidental. Those times of rest, the waste places, the change of activity, in the light of God's will, were seen as the training grounds, the extra curricular courses for the work God had for him to do. The soil out of which was to blossom the full-blown flower of his life. His work became at one and the same time his activity and his relaxation; its very diversity the only rest he ever needed. Truly the blessed Holy Spirit was the drive wheel of his labor, the power by which he was to travel thousands of miles, preach unrecorded numbers of sermons, to educate, to publish, to touch lives throughout this nation, and to reach out to lands across the sea.

Surely "ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you."

CHAPTER III

GOD-SENT

Father's experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit had immediate repercussions. It fired to greater intensity his evangelistic ardor, for, whatever else Father was, he was an evangelist. Everything he did was touched with the spirit of it. When I read that a sower went forth to sow, I think of him. How he delighted in scattering the seed of the gospel near and far and wide! He was a sower who took no chances with the soil, believing that each heart *might* be the good soil awaiting the divine planting.

At the time of Dr. Carradine's meeting Father had been planning a visit to the home folks in Tennessee. At the close of the revival his church granted him a desired leave of absence for this purpose. He went. His going, however, was not after the fashion of the flesh. Rather he went out as a veritable wave offering of evangelism. When it became noised abroad that he was making the trip, calls began coming to him to stop here and to stop there along the route for revival meetings. In this way a trip home was transformed under the hand of God into an evangelistic tour which continued without a break for two years, and zigzagged him across country in a main southeasterly direction. Like a flaming torch thrown into stubble, his Spirit-filled meetings caught fire. Sparks fell in all directions and wrote the slate that Father never did get around to writing anyway.

We left San Jose in 1895. When the train pulled out of the station with the McClurkans aboard, we were

beginning that long and continued chapter of life which might be entitled, "Years on a Train with Father."

The tour out of California came to an end, as all things must, but to the end of Father's life he was always going somewhere to hold a camp meeting or a revival, or to speak at some convention. And he insisted on taking us with him, Mother and us four children. Without doubt, we have traveled more miles with our heads thrust out of train windows, which were less protected then than now, than any four children on record. Cinders were always in our eyes and smoke in our nostrils but we seldom failed to see the engine on the curve ahead.

Indeed, we became veterans at train travel. So much so that we were as agile in the jostling, jolting aisles as the brass-buttoned conductor himself. We learned *how* following behind him picking up the little moons and stars that he punched out of the tickets.

Sleeping presented no problem on the overnight trips. At least, not for us children. We did not need the Pullman which Father could not afford anyway. We always could manage, somehow, to roll ourselves up into four soft balls and squirm down on the hardness of the green plush seats and sleep the sleep of the innocent, to awake in the morning, rubbing our grimy eyes, with the oft repeated query, "Where are we now?"

"Why you are in the very heart of the Great Smokies," Father might answer some fine morning as my childish eyes gazed out into a vista of so great vastness and loveliness that, looking, I felt my adolescent self a tiny drop of life caught up in a huge but fairy cup held on the points of the mist-draped mountains, where the white clouds became the froth of pure beauty foaming over the cup's brim and spilling into the valley below.

Or, "Wake up, children," Father would call to us, shaking us out of sound slumber. "Wake up, and look out the window," for he knew with what glee we watched

the small prairie dogs, which polka-dotted the plains, go scurrying into their self-styled bomb shelters from the blast of falling cinders as the train, dropping down from the western mountains, sped like wind in wheat across the prairie.

There came a moment on these revival trips which I have not found words to describe. The experience was one of sensation rather than expression. It happened when Mother would beckon to us in her dignified manner, and reaching for the well-provisioned lunch box, she handed out the tender fried chicken and the golden brown biscuit with as much order as the unsteady circumstances would permit. Then thundering into Ft. Worth, perchance, we hailed the hot tamale man who served up a second course hot with fire and pepper.

Some of the most shining moments of my childhood are thus bound up with these evangelistic sweeps of Father's. Like crossing the Mississippi River out of Memphis on the fast "Cannon Ball" train slowed down to a snail's pace as it approached the narrow high trestled bridge at that point. The conductor himself emphasized the importance of it by going through the coaches and collecting an extra fee as if to help the train in the stupendous effort it was about to make. The train then came to a full stop. Time out for a deep breath before it heaved its load across—a pause that thrilled my whole being with the thrill of danger and prepared me for the sudden jerks that shivered down the spine of the coaches as the train picked up momentum and slow motioned itself across. The modern many-laned bridge which spans the mighty river at that point now is a great step forward in the speed and ease of travel, but it dwarfs the old river mightily and makes of a great adventure just another casual incident.

Only yesterday as I stood on the viaduct that hoists the city traffic over the railroad tracks over which so

many times we had ridden with Father into this city of steel and iron—as I stood there and watched the blast furnaces belch their clouds of smoke and flame against the night sky, and saw the molten slag like skeleton fingers of fire claw its way on to the floor of the slag pit, I saw it as when a child I gazed upon it under the spell of his presence and from the shadow of a canvas tent under which he was conducting a revival somewhere in that city.

No wonder I never see a train without thinking of my Father. A train and Father became for me the symbols of the spread of the holiness movement near the turn of the century.

A train, however, was too slow for Father, even the fastest. As I look back upon it, the train seemed to lag behind his soaring spirit and the message of salvation which impelled it. To have lived in this day of speedy air travel would have fitted the pattern of his mind. Hopping from state to state, from coast to coast, then out into the yonder with the saving message of the gospel, would not have been beyond the scope of his vision and his effort. An evangelistic slate of Father's published under the caption, "On the Wing," indicates the speed of his desire to reach the largest number of people in the shortest length of time.

Father often used the text, "Be instant in season and out of season," when at some morning service he was instructing believers in the fine art of winning souls to Christ. These train trips fulfilled the implication of the text, and many a fellow traveler who chanced to be sitting with Father found himself introduced to Jesus Christ so adroitly that he was surprised to find himself talking naturally and without restraint about religion to a stranger who, by the simplicity of his manner, had placed him so at his ease.

Father was an artist in personal approach. He seldom blundered in this most delicate responsibility. Like his Master, he knew how to stand at the wells of life and give to thirsty hearts the water of salvation.

"Saving souls is not easy," Father once said. "It is accomplished through sacrifice."

Sacrifice is what it proved to be at Raton, New Mexico. We were a number of weeks out of California on the tour which was undertaken forthwith following Father's sanctification. Everything had moved along propitiously for us until we reached New Mexico. It was in this picturesque state that we ran into a blizzard. It was the first falling snow we children had ever seen, a beauty that had been held beyond our vision on the distant mountain peaks. How it snowed! The city of Raton emerged from the storm as crisp as a Christmas package wrapped in cellophane. The witchery of the winter held the trees in frozen charades, and the wind-banked snow became mountains of fun and adventure to four children bundled up fit to rival the Eskimos.

Fences and familiar roadside landmarks had been blotted out so that only a person with an Indian sense of direction, like Father's, would venture out. But venture he did. It became the most drastic churchgoing I can remember. Father led the way, like a young Moses, across that waste of snow, out into the white darkness of the night to the church house, the rest of us kite-tailing behind him. There was no miraculous wind to clear a path unless, indeed, it was the miracle of God's grace in his heart that made Father glad to toil and suffer that he might fulfill a date with even one soul who might not hear the story if he failed to tell it to him.

So we trudged along, the cold stinging our faces and our feet heavy with the weight of the snow when we heard a startled cry, "Papa, Papa," muffled as if the voice were coming from under a feather bed. Suddenly

everybody missed Mother, whom we soon discovered buried neck-deep in a heavy snowdrift into which she had stumbled. Father went to the rescue and lifted Mother up out of cold storage stiff as starch and as powdery white as a sugared doughnut.

The revival continued its allotted time in spite of raw weather. Father preached as earnestly to the few who managed to get there as if he were addressing a packed house and so, in spite of difficulties, the seeds of gospel truth were sown, like grass is sown, in the snow.

From the inception of this tour out of San Jose, remember, Father was headed for his native Tennessee. He was a long time getting there. When eventually he did arrive, he found a revival meeting in progress in the old Trinity Church, which was conducted by his boyhood friend, Jim Rye. Of course, Father was invited to preach but he held back, not that he wanted to be urged, but that he might make it plain to Jim Rye just what he was preaching.

"I am preaching a doctrine that is not popular in many churches, and it might hurt you with your membership. I want you to think about it."

"Are you preaching the Bible?" Brother Rye asked.

"Yes, I am preaching the Bible as I understand it."

"Well, then, go right ahead. I am not afraid of the Bible."

Thus it was Father preached his first sermon on "The Fullness of the Blessing" to his home community with the result that Brother Rye was himself gloriously sanctified in his own meeting and became not only the first fruits of Father's labor in Middle Tennessee but a mighty witness to the truth of holiness.

One of the high points of Father's ministry is the fact that the home folks called him again and again for re-

vivals and as a result many of the kinsfolk, both his and Mother's, rejoiced in the blessing of full salvation.

Just what Father was going to preach *in* when he reached his destination, from now on, gave him little concern. It was the message of the Living Word that counted. The open sky, or the leafy beauty of a tree, were to him a worthy temple under which to set up the altar of God. Often, of course, he preached in the churches, all kinds, but I think of him most often under a canvas tent, a brush arbor, in a deserted store, or a shed, for after all, he was pioneering with the old-new message of the Holiness Movement.

In time it came about that Father took a great deal of equipment with him on his evangelistic campaigns as well as an entourage of trained workers, ministers, singers, missionaries, and personal workers. An entire small community moved out with Father and overnight, as it were, a canvas town would spring up in some city to which he had been invited or which he considered strategic without regard to invitation or financial backing. The great outspreading tent, under which the services were to be conducted, was located on the spot most accessible to the people who were sure to come. Everybody lent a hand in setting up the family tents, which were to house the residents of the temporary village, and soon each tent took on the air of primitive domesticity, with straw strewn for a carpet. Cots outstretched their wiry comfort and other furnishings were hashed up to meet the personal needs of each.

At some distance from the family center, the restaurant tent was reared under expert hands. Soon kitchen equipment was installed and food such as a hungry girl cannot forget was provided equal to any emergency of hunger that outdoor living might bring to healthy men and women and growing children.

The stage was now set for the camp meeting. The lights flashed on in the big tent. The choir keyed the purpose of it all with "What can wash away my sins?" And answered in sweet refrain, "Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

Best of all, the presence of God was in His holy temple of canvas and straw and rough-hewn benches to convict of sin, to heal and cleanse the troubled soul.

It was a splendid thing for all of us that Father was a good weather prophet, for camp meetings are not always held in fair weather. The workers hoped and prayed for sunshine, but ditched their tents just in case God deemed it best to send the other kind of weather.

It happened in Memphis. The night service had closed. Everybody had gone to their tents, even the late stragglers, and one by one the lights twinkled off, leaving the camp in darkness. But Father could not rest. There was a feel in the atmosphere that did not suit him, so he slipped out to take a glance at things. One look at the black boiling cloud was enough. Father had to act quickly to get everyone up and dressed. It was not quick enough, however. The gale broke upon us. Tents were whipping in the wind like the wings of frightened birds, and falling as when those wings are broken. The lightning flashed and for split seconds we could see the big tent billowing under the wind which at times inflated it into a huge balloon, only to suck itself out and draw the canvas into a loose wrinkled fold of skin hanging on to the skeleton of poles. A cloudburst of rain turned loose upon us in so great torrents that the firemen, who had listened to the music from the nearby fire hall, came to our rescue.

The rain was not heavy enough nor hard enough, however, to wash up that meeting. We dried ourselves,

set up the tents again, repaired the damage, and Father proceeded with the general order of services.

The holiness tabernacles which began springing up under quick hammers, and served their day, were not, as I recall them, designed for beauty. But their solid squareness was built to serve the multitudes which thronged them. The commodious platforms which extended almost the entire breadth of the buildings, were deep enough to accommodate the orchestra and the multi-voiced choir singing:

*Oh, I never shall forget
How the fire fell,
When the Lord sanctified me.*

And the preacher! The platform was for his use primarily, and use it he did, if he so desired, the length and breadth of it, under the inspiration of his message. But not Father. He said that religion is likely to follow the natural bent of a person's temperament. Father was a quiet man. More often he spoke quietly but earnestly under the power of the Spirit. I have seen him greatly exercised over sin, and his preaching reached its most strident note when he was attacking it. Sin in high places, the city's sin as he met it in the backwash of the city's life—*sin!*

Few men preached with more power to the unsaved. Yet a great part of Father's ministry was to Christians, unfolding to them the meaning of a deeper consecration and pointing them to a new center which is formed in the personality when the heart is freed of *self*. He believed that the blessing of sanctification is an experience to be put to work as well as enjoyed. So he taught Christians how to work effectively in the Master's vineyard. He taught them how to pray.

To Father, prayer was basic. It was primary and fundamental. Indeed, prayer was almost a momentary

practice with him. If he sought the privacy of his study in the early morning hours, as was his custom, he would kneel beside his desk, his left knee touching the carpet, his right foot firmly planted on the floor ready to arise quickly to meet the interruptions of human need that continually knocked at his door.

He found little time to pray in privacy, so he prayed as he went about the duties of a busy day.

"Hello, Dad," I would call as I chanced to pass him on the street. If he failed to return my greeting, by some instinct I realized that Father was engaged in sublime conversation with his God, and was wholly unconscious of my presence.

One day a young preacher was walking along the street with Father. People here and there recognized him and spoke pleasantly. Father appeared not to hear them, so the younger man reported, and he did not just then. Farther down the block, however, something clicked in his consciousness. Instantly Father hesitated, doffed his hat, and bowed graciously right in the sad-eyed face of a cow that was grazing along the sidewalk. The cow was as much surprised, no doubt, as the young preacher was amused, at the result of Father's delayed action. Those who knew him best, however, had no difficulty in understanding that for that stretch of sidewalk, Father had entered into the closet of his inner world and, having closed the outer door, was praying in secret about some weighty matter that lay heavily upon his heart.

So Father prayed, and welded all who were associated with him into praying bands. Is it any wonder that his ministry drew men from all walks of life to the Saviour, surrounded as he was by those whom he had taught to use the key to the Kingdom!

The Holiness Movement is a singing movement. It was in Father's day. If, as some pointed out, the music

was too heavily syncopated, there was a sparkle, a spontaneity, and a release in it that blended a band of singing voices into a swelling chord of joyous testimony. Father loved the music of the holiness people. He loved the great old hymns of the church. The pity was that, like his Mother, he could not sing. The nearest approach to anything comparable to it was a high pitched monotonous chant which Father vocalized as a carrier for his favorite stanzas:

*Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.*

There is a song that the Holiness Movement adopted, a song for which Father often called. He loved it, I believe, because it expressed so completely the God-sent purpose of his heart:

*I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,
Over mountain, or plain, or sea;
I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord,
I'll be what you want me to be.*

CHAPTER IV

GOD-VISIONED

In the year 1897 the state of Tennessee celebrated its one hundredth anniversary. The Centennial Exposition was the spectacular book of remembrance which the state so proudly opened in its capital city of Nashville that all might read of its prowess, its glorious achievements, and its progress in the arts and sciences. The Parthenon, that crowned the hill of the Acropolis of ancient Greece, was built into the Exposition in exact replica as a symbol of Nashville's proud slogan, "The Athens of the South." Nashville was thronged with visitors eager to see what it all was about and join in the momentous acclaim.

It was a gala time in which to move to Nashville. Bands playing. Flags floating. Only Father had not willed it so. Providence arranged it for him. While he was on the last lap of the evangelistic tour, which had carried him from California to Middle Tennessee, and was in the heat of a glorious revival wave which was sweeping that section of the state, where hundreds were taking the Lord Jesus as their Sanctifier and many sinners were accepting him as their Saviour, his ministry was interrupted by the sudden illness of his son, an illness so critical that the advice of specialists was indicated. Father went to Nashville at once and established temporary residence, little dreaming that he and Nashville had a work to do that would take the greater part of a quarter of a century to do it.

Father was in a tough spot now. The difficulties were almost insurmountable. One thing was certain. To re-

turn to California was out of the question for months to come.

"Lead kindly light. One step . . ." Father took that step. He aligned himself with the few holiness people in Nashville and began campaigning with his gospel tent. He was a commanding personality, tall, lankish. His face was a blend of the refinements of the saint and scholar and the rugged marks of a leader of men. He was absolutely fearless, yet there pervaded his whole being a humility as genuine and artless as childhood. He was original in his manner of preaching, and he was deeply in earnest. He possessed a native wit, the Irish in him, that sparkled in his illustrations, many of which were drawn from his own contacts with human nature at its everyday level. He was not a scientist, yet he possessed that type of mind as was seen in his ability to accumulate facts, organize them, and pigeonhole them so that they were ready for instant use. Father attracted attention wherever he was preaching, whether under a tent or in the churches. And some of his most successful revivals during the early days in Nashville were held in a few Methodist churches whose ministers were sympathetic to the doctrine of Sanctification or enjoyed the experience. There were a few. Their blessed fellowship and loyal co-operation were worthy stones in a foundation yet to be laid.

With the approach of winter, the summer tent campaign, which had spread from vacant lot to vacant lot in various sections of Nashville and had gathered momentum with each successive revival, came to a close. The old tent was folded away, that weather-beaten strip of canvas under which God himself had tabernacled in mighty manifestations of power, descending upon believing men and women who were to write their lives into the truth and progress of the Holiness Movement throughout the southland. Winter came, the winter of

1898, and found Father in a deep valley of significant decision. There he stood like a reaper with the golden grain of harvest scattered about him. What must he do with this following of holiness people in the city and out, who were looking to him for leadership?

While he was mulling this question in his mind a chain-lightning streak of trouble struck him, and us, too, and might have done us up, except for the insulating presence of Christ in our home.

Father had left the house to catch a train for an out-of-town appointment, and had gone as far as the transfer station, which was a commodious arcade-like junction through which passed all the streetcars of the city—a convenience which since has been sacrificed to progress and a streamlined bus service. However, it is still remembered, especially in this war-weary day, for the shelter it furnished and the seats it provided. Too, there was the newsstand where you could while away lagging moments, and the popcorn vender, and candy counters. And if you were not running to catch your car you might have a pleasant chat with friends. Always it was a central meeting place for any who wished to get together.

On this particular occasion the transfer station was jammed to capacity with a convention crowd, for which Nashville is noted. As Father was pressing through it, a pickpocket relieved him of his pocketbook which contained all the money he had in the world—except, of course, the amount he had left with Mother, which was not too much but in Mother's hands was always more. So he made a dash for home. When he arrived Mother was not so much concerned with the loss of the money as she was with the bright red flags she saw waving in Father's cheeks. She well knew that that was not the work of a pickpocket. Money, its loss or gain, did not affect him in that manner. No, Father was ill—the shining target of double pneumonia, a disease that is

terrible enough in this day of miracle drugs, and was so much worse then without them.

Now, if you want to see how small the circumference of a dollar is, just view it from the angle of illness. In the days that followed, Mother's small and precious store dwindled rapidly, but she said nothing about it, for in our home all such drastic situations were a sacred triangle between Father and Mother and God. Only Father could do nothing about it now. His part was squarely up to Mother.

Came the day, all too soon, when she had cooked the very last particle of food in the pantry. I was too small to know just what she did about it then, but I know now. As she ministered in the sickroom, often weary in mind and body, she erected an altar in her heart and spoke confidently to her Father about the empty purse and the depleted pantry, punctuating her petitions with little staccato-like upwellings of praise and thankfulness for His love and unflinching care.

While she was thus engaged there was a knock at the back door. Mother opened it to find two men standing there whom she recognized as regular attendants at Father's services.

"Excuse us, Mrs. McClurkan, for coming to the back door, but we have some things to bring in and we do not want to disturb Brother McClurkan."

They brought it in all right—a good-sized grocery store! There it was, luscious food, as if the fall gardens had yielded their finest for us. Hens had vied in travail for us. Cows had let down their creamiest milk for us. Golden fruit! So much of everything! Truly, Mother with her finger of faith had released the divine bounty.

There is a verse in the Bible which says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and

steal. But lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven” Jesus said it, and it was during this experience that we discovered just what He meant. The letters revealed it to us—letters from Tennessee to Texas, along the route to California and back again. From everywhere Father’s life of ministry had swept him came those letters. Strange, very few of the writers even knew that Father was ill, and Father himself could remember but few of the signatures. The letters all read very much alike:

“Dear Bro. McClurkan: You will find enclosed check in the amount of ——— dollars, to repay you for what you did for me at such and such a time when I was in such dire straits.” Thus it was, Father was cared for out of his own generosity, out of that treasure laid up in heaven.

Father was sinking fast now. “He will enter the crisis tonight,” the doctors said. Mother entered that crisis with him, on her knees. To the very jaws of death she went in prayer, all night wrestling with the powers of darkness, leaning hard on the promises of God, making them burn in her consciousness, submissive to His will, reiterating the words of her consecration, “Thy will be done, Thy will be done.” Toward morning, an assurance broke over her as sparkling and refreshing as the morning dew and washed away all doubt. She arose to meet the dawn rested, with a great peace in her heart.

“Mrs. McClurkan,” the nurse said, slipping an arm around her, “I think you should know I think you should be prepared”

“He will get well,” Mother replied, her face a lighted candle in the dimness of the early morning.

The nurse walked briskly away, her starched skirts rattling with impatience. “How could she be so blind!” The doctors came and shook their heads. No sooner had

they gone than a woman entered Mother's room, a woman whose life was to flow alongside Mother's in a deep current of friendship.

"I have come, Mrs. McClurkan," she explained tenderly, "at the request of the doctors. They think I should tell you—they feel that you should know that the end is very near. . . ."

"Thank you, Mrs. Benson," Mother answered her. "I realize how difficult this has been for you. But"—and her face was radiant, "he is going to get well."

Father got well. Of course he did! Before too long he was back at work, with the same pertinent question dangling before him, "What must be done with this following of holiness people, in the city and out, who were looking to him for leadership?"

Now, during these months of Father's enforced sojourn in Nashville, he had been looking at the city in a way in which he had not viewed it before. He saw Nashville, with its favorable location, its transportation facilities, its educational structure, as a center strategic to the dissemination of scriptural holiness throughout the South. At the same time there had been growing up within him a deepening conviction that this was his field of labor. This conviction grew and abided. He could not escape it. Acting upon it, after earnest prayer for guidance, Father planted his handful of seed in the soil of Nashville, deep in the Father's will as he understood it. He immediately appointed a committee from the small following of holiness people and requested it to provide ways and means for conserving the summer's work, with the result that they secured the Conservatory of Music for temporary use, and God did the rest.

It was one of those days at home that one never forgets, the day Father rushed in with good tidings written all over him.

"A committee of laymen from the Tulip Street Methodist Church, South, in East Nashville," he said, "called upon me and offered us the old church building from which the congregation has moved, free of charge, for our work!"

And thus it was a permanent meeting place was secured for a band of people definitely holiness.

This church building, an old landmark of southern Methodism in East Nashville in the days when east was East, long before the western swell of the city had its changing effect upon population, had been under lock and key since the day its membership had moved into the beautiful new chimed edifice some blocks distant. It might be said that from the moment Mother, together with a few others of that holiness group, descended upon that church with broom and mop and muscle that the work in Nashville was begun, and Father was launched on his long career as pastor, a ministry which, before it was concluded, covered the city like a finespun web of brotherly love and drew to its fellowship one of the largest congregations in the city.

No sooner had Father established the home base in Nashville, with this small beginning, than he reached out in thought for a plan that would unite the holiness work throughout Middle Tennessee, and conserve and develop the fruits of his recent revival efforts in that section. He accomplished this purpose by calling together representatives from this part of the state in a convention which met in the old Tulip Street Church, July 18, 1898. The organization set up by this convention under the name, Pentecostal Alliance, was a loosely knit body, and it was significant for two reasons. First, it started something that lives on today. Second, it incorporated as its objectives those living goals which were forever the drive wheels of Father's purpose:

To feed and strengthen the centers of holiness already planted.

To push onward in the evangelization of the home field.

To kindle the flame of missionary zeal that burned on the altars of the Apostolic Church.

The Pentecostal Alliance was welded into a more closely knit organization in 1901, in a convention of one hundred and twenty members which met in Nashville, and under its new name, Pentecostal Mission, adopted by the convention, became two years later an incorporated body under the charter granted to it by the state of Tennessee. This was the organization which spear-headed the penetration of the Holiness Movement southward, to east and west. Truly it can be told that the inspiration behind it, and all that was accomplished by it, was Father's great spirit.

Its small beginning with all it came to be in the ensuing years, its developments, its enlargements, its ramifications, was largely the product of his spiritual illumination, his over-all vision for the work of the Kingdom, and his consecration to that work. His brilliant love for God and man was the root from which sprang the many branches of the work, expressing and defining, as they did, the catholicity of his outreaching interests.

It was Father's exalted conception that the Holiness Movement is an instrument of God let loose in the world for the good of all men, unbound by walls or limitations of any kind; that the doctrine of Scriptural Holiness is an untrammelled gift free to hungry-hearted believers everywhere of all creeds and faiths—a holy thing which, by the dynamic power inherent in it, would penetrate and permeate all Christendom.

He saw the experience of sanctification as a truth too big to be confined within any one denomination, itself

the fount of life to *all* denominations, whose waters springing up into the life of the churches would impart to them the fire and the flame of the spirit and power of the Early Church. He saw the centers of holiness as places of fellowship where professing people could be taught and trained and strengthened in the doctrine, where Christians might be sanctified and sinners saved. He invited into this fellowship people from all the churches who either had received the experience of sanctification or expressed a desire to obtain it. All such people were at liberty to maintain their membership in the church of their choice while at the same time they were welcome to all the Holiness Movement had to offer in spiritual benefits.

To this undenominational work he felt as definitely called as he did to the ministry in early life, and to be free to do it he requested of his synod in California a continued leave of absence, a leave which he did not terminate. Yet, while Father was dedicating himself to this nondenominational work as he understood it, he lifted his voice in prophetic utterance. In the convention of 1900 he said this:

“If the time ever comes when the dear Lord wants His people to organize a new church, He will so indicate it.”

PART I

“Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing my dear Redeemer’s praise!” was the exclamation of Father’s soul. In his writings he recorded the hope that he might plant the message of holiness in ten thousand missions throughout the land. With this vision and prayer in his heart he gave himself wholeheartedly to the task, many times “torn with work and worn in the battle,” as he put it. Many of the summer evangelistic campaigns were now given over to the purpose of planting Pentecostal Mission centers at as many points as he could reach. His evangelistic slates show him at work in as many as five states in a single summer, sowing the seeds of holiness and leaving at each point a group of sanctified people to tend and nurture the work he had begun.

In the meantime, the work in Nashville went forward. It outgrew its headquarters location in the old Tulip Street Church, as it subsequently did the Hines School building on Summer Street to which it had moved in 1903. Two years later it was forced to seek larger and more adequate quarters. So property was purchased in the very heart of the business district on Cherry Street, now Fourth Avenue, where from time to time, the location was enlarged and improved to meet the growing demands upon it.

Father was not alone in this glorious work. There was associated with him a group of Spirit-filled laymen, businessmen of Nashville who, with their wives, had been drawn by his teaching from the four corners of Nashville in the early months of Father’s labors in that city. And here begins the epic of the Official Board, a group of faithful men who stood by Father throughout his life, or theirs; who shared with him the toil and the sacrifice and the reward of accomplishment—the inner circle, his

beloved friends and brethren: John T. Benson, treasurer; Tim H. Moore, secretary; E. H. Welburn, Jim H. Yearman, Ed Thompson, Arthur S. Ransom, and J. O. McClurkan, president.

Indeed, this body of men, backed and supported by the Pentecostal Mission congregation in Nashville, a praying band of people if there ever was one, tithers, liberal givers, made much of Father's vision come true. They placed in his hand, assuming with him a large indebtedness to do it, the instrument which Father considered did more good than any single means he was able to employ. They purchased *Zion's Outlook*, a weekly publication through which Father's voice and teachings were amplified a hundred times over. The name of the paper was changed at length to *Living Water*, a name which indicated its lofty mission as the stream of life to the entire Pentecostal Mission organization.

Living Water held a unique place in holiness literature. It was so much like Father. It was published to do good, rather than make money. He donated his time and his talent to it. It had no private ownership, having been made the property of the home field. In time it dropped all secular advertising. The cost of publication always exceeded the subscription price, which deficit was made up largely by "this group of men" in Nashville. Its purpose was in line with the evangelistic and missionary intent of the organization of which it was the voice. Certainly its aim was to teach and lead sanctified people into sane, well-balanced Christian characters.

Living Water was loaded with spiritual food, as Father meant it to be, expertly gleaned and set forth in a simplicity of statement, attractive in arrangement and design which made it readable. Father had a way all his own when editing it. He prayed as he worked. When he was selecting copy he would stop and pray, then proceed with his work, and pray again. In dictating his edi-

torials he often paced the floor praying between sentences. Thus his message went out on the printed page steeped in prayer, and in response there flowed back to his desk letters too numerous to estimate bearing testimony to the blessing the paper had brought into the lives and homes of its readers.

I remember listening to an annual financial report which was being submitted to the Convention in a year when the Pentecostal Mission was at the height of its program. Item after item in the year's budget was read, running into thousands of dollars for the various aspects of the work. I guess it had to be read as a part of the record, "Two hundred dollars," the treasurer continued, "paid this year to our pastor, Brother McClurkan." Such was Father's world-embracing heart! He had bigger and better places to use the money given sacrificially by that generous band of people than into his own salary.

Father supported himself, in the main, by means of his book business, which had an humble beginning in spite of its long-handled name, the Pentecostal Book and Tract Depository. It was, indeed, the child of necessity, since Father had a family to care for while he was organizing the holiness work in Nashville and getting it on its feet. If you had run into Father on the street some fine day of his early residence in Nashville, no doubt you would have been amazed as well as amused at finding him carrying a basket—just a plain split-bottom market basket. This basket was the Depository end of his book business. In it he carried a few books and tracts and a small supply of hand-embossed scripture mottoes of various shapes and sizes which preached a short sermon to the purchaser while they gave Father a small profit. He never forgot, nor did we, the needs this basket supplied during those first difficult months in Nashville. Is it any wonder that Father became one of the largest importers of scripture mottoes, keeping in mind some

hard-pressed preacher who, like himself when the going was tough, could make his way and at the same time leave a testimony! So the basket grew. It passed through various stages of development from basket to a table of growing dimensions, then book room, and came to maturity as the Pentecostal Mission Publishing Company which, under the management of John T. Benson, not only published *Living Water*, but housed the Depository as well. Here the choicest literature produced within the ranks of the Holiness Movement could be secured as well as the best devotional literature in the religious field, together with tracts and mottoes and Bibles.

Father had not thought of writing a book himself. He was thrust into authorship by his boyhood friend and early convert.

"Why don't you write a book setting forth the doctrine of Sanctification?" Brother Rye asked Father disturbingly. "Such a book is greatly needed by the rank and file of our people."

Father, already loaded with work, thought a moment, then replied simply, "I'll pray about it."

In due time, *Wholly Sanctified* came off the press to be followed by other volumes dealing with various phases of the teachings of the holiness people. His last book on Personal Work, a subject on which Father was so eminently prepared to speak, was in manuscript form at the time of his death. Its completed chapters, however, were appearing as editorials on the pages of *Living Water* when Father laid down his pen forever.

PART II

Father once said that the Holiness Movement was like a wave that for long stretches of time seemed to be lost in the vast oceans of truth. Then building itself up into a mighty crest it breaks with great power upon the shores of the church. Such was the revival of holiness which was manifested in the great religious awakening which swept our country near the turn of the century. It thrust into its ranks a body of choice men and women eager to enter its ministry as preachers, missionaries, and evangelists. Many of these men and women were poor and had been denied by force of circumstances the benefits of a formal education. All of them, regardless of their backgrounds, needed special training to equip them for the responsibility at hand. Father was alert to the dangers threatening the cause of holiness if its leadership were given over into untrained hands, and he was quick to sense the basic need of education and training for those who were to preach and teach its doctrine. Many fanatical trends which were cropping up in the Movement were due, in his thinking, to this lack of trained leadership in the very genesis of the Movement.

It was to meet this situation that the keen resourcefulness of Father's mind had its finest manifestation. Something had to be done quickly. It could not be done in the old established way. Of that he was certain. So he brought to the problem the light of a new idea which had to do with the question of adult education in a day when this subject had received scant attention, if any. He believed that the adult mind could learn. That it could cover ground effectively and in a short period of time since *spurred by a purpose* the adult would bring to the educational process an incentive for closer applica-

tion which would result in speedy realization. So streamlining the old conventional curriculum to the measure of his thought, he opened the Bible Training School in Nashville and put his idea to work.

This institution, which for sixteen years was to embody the outworking of Father's cherished dream, was opened formally, November 4, 1901, in the Hines School building on Summer Street, property which the Pentecostal Mission congregation in Nashville had purchased to supersede the old Tulip Street Church as a headquarters location. It was chartered under the laws of Tennessee in 1910 as Trevecca College, having been named in honor of the undenominational college established by Lady Huntingdon in England. The initial enrollment, which was small, was drawn in part from a class which the year previous had been meeting at night at the Pentecostal Mission to study Bible and related subjects. Others came from a distance, and together they lived that first year almost like one big family studying the ABC's of truth.

Trevecca, like Father, was different. Different in aim and purpose. The highest ideal set before the student was to be like Jesus, and the end and aim of his preparation was to learn how skillfully to bring souls to Christ. Its doors were open *not* to everybody, but anybody who had been called of God as preacher, evangelist, missionary, and teacher, or to definite Christian work, was admitted upon application to the student body. However, the school was definitely the school of the prophet. For him it was organized and opened. It was Father's purpose to provide in some way for each student whom he believed to be really called of God. Therefore, he saw to it that expenses were reduced to a minimum. Tuition was *free*, and dare I tell it in this day of skyrocketing prices, board and lodging were offered for \$10.00 a month!

“And if you do not have that, preacher boy, come on anyway. Together we will find a way.”

Father's correspondence with a young preacher in Louisiana was typical. This young man wrote Father concerning his call to preach and of his great desire to go to school, but of his inability to do so because of his lack of money. This boy, who came and was so closely associated with Father in the evangelistic field in the Pentecostal Mission over a period of years and who now holds an honored place in a conference of the Methodist church, said to me recently:

“I will never forget your father's reply to my letter. To my delight and surprise he wrote briefly: ‘Dear Brother L——, Come along. Bring your bedding. Your brother in Christ, J. O. McClurkan.’”

Let it be told that no preacher was ever allowed to leave the school for lack of money. Work was provided in the school whereby students could earn their way. Stenographers and secretaries were given work in the office. The assistant cooks in the kitchen, the bakers, the waiters in the dining room were often drawn from the best talent in the student body. Part-time jobs in town were secured, preachers were given preaching appointments at points within a fifty-mile radius of the city, and throughout the bounds of the Pentecostal Mission funds were continually being donated to help boys and girls through school.

“Trevecca was cheap,” Father said, “because of sacrifice.”

Look at the faculty. When Father announced his purpose of opening a Bible school, there flowed to his standard able teachers who shared his vision and understood his idea and purpose. These godly men and women donated their time and ability to the teaching program or

accepted their board only, or in time came to accept salary at a low figure.

There was Miss Henrietta Matson. No finer teacher as to preparation and character graced the faculty of any of the schools of Nashville. Miss Matson had received her education in the colleges and universities of Scotland. Languages were at her fingertips. Greek was not Greek to her, but a book as open as her own English tinged with Scotch. Early in life she had consecrated her life to God and, yielding to His call, she had given the best years of her life and all her talents to the mission field in Africa. Africa was the very heart of her, so as old age approached, she came to Nashville and in pursuance of her life's work with the colored race, she held the Chair of Mathematics in Fisk University. At the opening of Trevecca, she gave her spare time to its classroom work. She was a walking encyclopedia of information as well as a boiling spirit for missions, and her godly influence and ability were God-given boons in those initial months of Trevecca.

The telephone rang one day. The voice speaking announced that the stranger, whom it represented, had arrived and was waiting at the Union Station to be delivered to Trevecca College. Father went down not knowing exactly what to expect, and picked up a piece of feminine baggage that he would have sold right then for far less than it proved to be worth.

The truth is, Miss Fannie had arrived, having come all the way from Virginia, unheralded and unannounced, to offer her services to the Bible School. She posed a problem and Father knew it. Had he known at that moment that he had her on his hands to his dying day, he would have been disturbed. The trouble was, you had to look at Miss Fannie Claypoole's outside self instead of her inside self. If there had been some trick by which she could have reversed herself, the problem

would have been solved. But there was none. So it took a little time to find out what a saint she was. It took time to uncover the soul of her and to discover engraved upon her heart a world-sized map of the mission fields and a love for people everywhere.

Father put Miss Fannie to work, just anything, to keep her busy and to give him time to find her out. He found her out, all right. His first discovery was that she not only knew her English, but she knew how to teach it and write it, too. This opened the classroom door to her and in time led her into the editorial room of *Living Water*, where for years she did valuable detail work and kept the paper going for some time after Father's death.

Miss Fannie's most valuable contribution to the school, however, and the one for which she will long be remembered and live in the hearts of the students, was those years she served as matron. Here her long-repressed maternal instinct found beautiful sublimation as she mothered and nursed, scolded and loved, student body after student body until after Father's death, when she resigned to become a deaconess in the First Church of the Nazarene in Nashville.

A fine example of Father's advanced thinking in the educational field is embraced not only in his program of adult education, but is seen in his clinical method of teaching, whereby the student was given opportunity, day by day, to put into actual practice those things he had learned in the classroom—a forerunner of the accepted practice in all teacher training today. Father simplified matters by calling it, merely, the Combining of Theory and Practice, the method which harked back to his boyhood. By use of it he developed the students, each in the path of his own talent, and by means of it, he built a bracket of city evangelism in Nashville more original and extensive than any I have observed elsewhere. Splitting the student body into small groups, he

sent them out under trained leaders into the shadows and slush of Nashville. They preached the gospel in the penitentiary, the jail, and the workhouse. The institutions for the poor, schools for the blind, were included in the program, as were the homes for the aged. Even the slums were penetrated by a fraction of this evangelism. By means of it he developed to a high degree of efficiency his "highway and hedge ministry," as he termed it, street meetings which Father used as an approach to a mass of people who would not hear the story in any other way.

Father gave to his preachers rare moments of teacher-pupil association which did more to teach them methods than any book they could have studied. During the school months Father was seldom alone. As he went about his pastoral duties or in pursuance of his "doorstep ministry" there was always a young preacher at his side who learned from him firsthand the perfect manner of personal contact. Nobody entered a hospital quite like him. And if I were going to be hanged I had rather have Father with me than anyone I know. Tender, human strokes the young minister had the opportunity to observe and absorb.

The question arises, "Was Father's idea a sound educational policy? Did it work?"

For answer let us look at George. George was a young fellow who came to Trevecca from somewhere in Alabama where the hay was high. He wanted to preach, felt called to it, and had a knack for it. That which he did not possess was preparation and information, nor the vehicle of words and speech. Lacking these outlets, George's pent-up desire overflowed in a profusion of high-sounding, many-syllabled words which he had picked up, parrot-like, and would fling with reckless abandon into his efforts at preaching, just where they sounded best. Now, Father had an appreciation of words, the

beauty and wonder of them, the power of them as the polished instrument of thought, the conveyer of dreams and emotions. The vehicle of truth. So Father understood George's yen and sympathized with him.

"I'll expose George to words," Father decided. "Simple English words."

He mapped his course of study so that it included spelling, the method that is taught by syllables, so that each fraction of the word is mastered and assimilated. He was to study reading, the rudiments of English, and public speaking. In due time Father thought it safe to try George out. He sent him into a rural community to preach, where, should his old habit crop out, the good people there would charge it off to his Trevecca learning anyway. Mother went along to listen and report. George got off to a good start. Mother relaxed in her seat in a glow of pride and pleasure, when, to her consternation, George reached the end of his rope. His sermon blew up in a storm of words as big as hailstones which pelted mercilessly that hapless congregation. Habit won out, but George held on until his name was added to the roll of Trevecca alumni.

Years went on. My sister was attending a great celebration which was being staged by one of our denominations in a southern city. There in the midst of that august assemblage sat George, grown gray in the service of the church, with an enviable record of achievement to his credit, both as preacher and pastor.

Of course, there was Zeke who, like many another, decided, mistakenly, on the spur of the moment, that he was called to preach. He blew into Trevecca with a great deal of gusto, registered, and proceeded to the capitol to let Governor Hooper know that another Republican had arrived in the city to keep him company. This done, he returned to the school and drifted into a spelling class which was in progress just in time for

the teacher to pick a word from the spelling book and pitch at him. "Onion," the teacher pronounced. And Zeke, full of confidence, spelled the word just like it smells, "Yun-iun."

Zeke did not last long. But there was another boy in that class who did. Let's call him Kim. When Father was attending a convention in Pilot Point, Texas, by invitation of a young budding denomination, he ran into Kim. Kim had been preaching since he was seventeen years of age—just started out from scratch, as it were, with little more than a heartfelt experience of religion which, after all, is the safest starting point for any preacher.

When Father returned to Nashville, Kim was not far behind. He arrived at Trevecca, a tall, slender lad whose youth, like June in the song, was popping out all over him, and a certain shyness, too. What had Father's discerning eye seen in Kim in so short a time! Did he see him as I think of Kim now, as a seed, small and insignificant, holding within him a silent, explosive force which, if well planted and nurtured, would burst into rich foliage? For Kim did just that. The latent talent within him, surprising to himself as well as to others, outran, if possible, the printed textbook and gave him that "know how" which made him at home in any group, the magnetic center of it, so that he walked at ease with prince or pauper. His bubbling love of life drew people to him, and his inexhaustible energy sent him to any task with keenest relish.

Father loved Kim, and who wouldn't! He invited him often to go with him on his pastoral calls, and by frequent contact placed the great strength of his personality up against any weakness that might be inherent in the growing sapling that was Kim.

Kim went out from Trevecca to take up his ministry on the lowest rung of the ladder of a denomination

which believes definitely in starting its young men at the bottom. He was neither dismayed by the infinitesimal dot on the map to which the bishop assigned him nor by the meager salary which the appointment paid its pastors. To Kim the work was not small, nor insignificant. It was God's work, therefore of vast importance, so he gave to the task the best that was in him and the best came back to him. He was steadily climbing that ladder, two rungs at a time in spots, when he enlisted in the Army of World War I as a chaplain. He returned from France in due time to fill, before his death, some of the outstanding churches in his connection.

George and Kim are the answer to your question. But they are only a fractional part of that answer. The student body which year after year went from Father's presence into the life-stream of humanity is the fuller answer, those who hold graduate degrees from many of our colleges and universities, some filling professorships or are themselves college presidents, while others are ministering in many of the pulpits, large and small, of their respective denominations. Others gave their lives to distant fields, while still others are living lives of service in a quiet way in unknown places.

PART III

A portrait of Father would not be like him without the highlighting of his holy enthusiasm for missions. This missionary vision which he wrote into that first convention in old Tulip Street Church was the coal of fire which kindled the soul of the Pentecostal Mission organization, giving it energy at home and power to take root abroad. Father believed with all his might that an apostolic missionary spirit is the result of the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and that this matter of missions is next in importance to that of living a godly life *since* it is through the missionary agency that the church was to preach the gospel as a witness to all nations.

Therefore, he made his people mission conscious by setting up in all meetings under his direction throughout the bounds of the Pentecostal Mission work a program of missionary cultivation whereby definite days were given over to missionary education. He fed his people missions through the pages of *Living Water* as a farmer feeds his fattening hens corn. He *stuffed* them with it. In the conventions, which were established annual functions of the Pentecostal Mission work, a high point in the program was reached in the missionary services. Missionaries were present in person, those eager to go out and those coming home, battle-scarred, on furlough. Their presence lent color and inspiration as well as realism, making millions of distant peoples and their needs live in the consciousness of the Pentecostal Mission congregations.

The crying need of missionary enlightenment was brought forcibly to Father's mind while he was conduct-

ing the camp meeting at Waco, Texas, to which he had been invited for his first engagement in 1901.

Listen, for Father is speaking now:

"Waco was by far the largest camp in all the southland. Multitudes of people were in attendance, and in spite of the long continued drouth of that year, the campers pitched their tents in the dust and heat in great numbers. The immense tabernacle was wholly inadequate to shelter the throngs. So great was God's outpouring that the altar was filled over and over again, one altar service running into another throughout the day and late into the night. Yet, in the midst of that gracious revival season, no opportunity was offered, no place given on the program for the presentation of the cause of missions."

On Father's return to Nashville, with this matter uppermost in his mind, he spoke through *Living Water*:

"Perhaps the day is not far distant when the great cause of missions will be stressed in all holiness camp meetings. And when it is so emphasized, scores of consecrated Christians will offer themselves for this strategic work."

Many of the students enrolled in Trevecca were in training for the foreign field. Father poured the very best that Trevecca had to offer into these students.

"The mission field is no dumping ground for failures," he said.

He gave them not only the wealth of textbook information and the larger education of practical experience, but he had the gift of imparting to these young people his vision and his faith, so that they were eager to go out without script or stated salary, trusting God for their needs.

These candidates were sent out in the early beginnings of Father's work in Nashville under the auspices of the Christian and Missionary Alliance of New York. Later they were under the Foreign Board of the Pentecostal Mission itself, whose treasury was the visible answer to the vibrant faith of a people trained in missionary giving, who poured their free-will offerings into it and by means of it established mission stations in China and India, Central and South America, and Cuba. At one time the congregation in Nashville, alone, supported thirty missionaries and felt the divine quickening of spiritual life that is the resultant of missionary endeavor.

The fact is, Father taught his people to *give* as well as to go, so that the missionary collections were occasions to be remembered with pleasure, which is not the way most collections are remembered. They were not those high pressure grinds, which so many congregations suffer through. Instead, the more the people gave, the happier they became. And if you did not finish it off in short order, the whole thing was likely to break up in a general praise and testimony meeting.

I have seen pictures of a missionary dollar cut pie-fashion, each slice showing the disbursements to various needs, a slice for operational expenses. Father needed no such illustration. The Pentecostal Mission dollar went to the field whole, uncut. Not a cut was deducted for other causes, nor for the home office, nor for the upkeep of the Mission Board.

It was to provide a place for training the students who were offering themselves for medical work in the mission field, as well as to add a certain number of charity beds, which the city needed greatly at this time, that led Father in his ever-widening vision to open Trevecca Hospital. God blessed him with an efficient staff of doctors in Nashville, but the venture was not suffi-

ciently launched at the time of his death to carry on without him.

All the threads of the Pentecostal Mission program, including the Home for Delinquent Girls and the Girls' Orphanage, which were auxiliaries to the work in Nashville, came together in the annual conventions which met in the fall and patterned the work for the ensuing year. If you failed to attend one of these conventions you missed a big juicy slice of religious experience. These conventions, which synchronized with the opening of school so that the incoming students might share in the proceedings, were great ingatherings of the Pentecostal Mission adherents, to which all bands of holiness people, outside the bounds of this organization, were invited. They flocked in from the flowering rim of the southland, and beyond. They came from east of the Mississippi and south of the Ohio, from the eastern seaboard, from Texas, and a scattering from greater distances. The railroads cooperated with Father in extending special rates to all delegates in attendance. And when they arrived, homes and free entertainment were provided for all.

Father presided over these conventions but seldom preached. Instead, he threw out his dragnet, as it were, and drew to the pulpit the very cream of the Holiness Movement—outstanding preachers, teachers who knew how to dig the golden nuggets of truth out of the Bible, and evangelists skilled in applying these truths in convincing and convicting power. Orators, sweet singers, unique personalities, all of them were there.

It was a time of rejoicing, where people mingled their glad testimony and praise and united their hearts in uplifting tides of prayer. A place where they pooled their problems and sought to work them out; where they drank of the "fountain that never runs dry" and caught

an enlarged vision for the work of God's kingdom, and gave themselves in deeper consecration to that work.

Father was the moving spirit of these gatherings—the one ever present to welcome and encourage, to give spiritual tone and, by God's help, to direct and secure success. He was the inspiration of the services. It was his presence. Like soft rain in summer, that fell in benediction on the people. His graciousness and humility made him the willing servant of all.

CHAPTER V

GOD-COMPANIONED

Mother's life is the most concrete example of Father's ability to rightly estimate a person, to see the hidden talent, and to give opportunity to use and develop it. Mother was a timid country girl, pleasant to look upon, when she and Father were married. Like her father, she was strong and vibrant. Health, which was to support and buttress Father's frailness, raced through her—life itself whose richness mounted her face, and receding, left rosy petals on her cheeks.

On her mother's side she was descended from a family of the aristocratic poor. Proud people. People of high ideals, high standards, high morals, some land, and little money. Mother inherited from them an appreciation of education and a thirst for it. Therefore, she took advantage of all the schooling available to her, which was not too much. The whole of her life has been a striving to catch up with that which she feels she missed in youth. She sent her own children to school rigorously. They must follow the gleam. Oh, you might stay out if you had measles or were run down by one of those new automobiles. She, herself, was a student in the night classes which met prior to the opening of Trevecca College. I remember that she studied advanced grammar at the hands of a strict teacher who still believed in the method of diagram. How I envied Mother's sentences! When she had done with them, they resembled, more than anything, a branching trellis of Rambler roses.

When Father opened the school, Mother took time out from her manifold duties at home and her heavy

responsibilities in the school to take a three-year course of study, and throughout her connection with Trevecca she frequently enrolled in its classes.

She was born of an unusual mother. Grandmother Rye was a woman who did not seem altogether a part of the circumscribed world in which she was compelled to live. Some fraction of her existed in a sphere above the realm of material things and everyday happenings. She gave to Mother an aptness that, like a strong tendril reaching up and out, sucked to itself a knowing not gleaned from books. So when Mother followed Father out into an ever-widening world, she was quick to become a part of it.

Mother was by nature a home-loving body, and if she had been left to her own inclination, would have lived her life within its walls, plying the domestic arts at which she was expert, and rearing her family. It took the power of God to thrust her out. However, her retiring disposition stood her in good stead. It gave her a rare quality of followship, which is a splendid ingredient for any preacher's wife. It saved her, and Father as well, from that particular brand of irritation which so many churches suffer when the pastor's wife has an overplus of leadership. At the same time, it impelled her into a life of public service because of her willingness to comply whenever she was called upon.

Mother was converted when she was fifteen years of age. She had professed religion earlier in life and had joined the Methodist church, which denomination Grandfather thought was the boundary of the kingdom of Heaven. Deep down within her, however, she felt that she had not been converted. There was a definite reason for this dissatisfaction. She loved to dance, not that she had really danced in the accepted understanding of that amusement. But she had the *love* of it in her heart and somehow, without knowing why, she

made that condition the secret test of her conversion. She kept all this to herself, and gave vent to the urge when nobody was looking. When she was alone upstairs, when the surge of motion and rhythm broke over her, she would preen herself before the mirror and pirouetting and twirling lightly, her bare feet made dainty patterns on the floor to the tune she softly hummed, her long, full skirts billowing about her and flirting with her ankles. Bowing gracefully to her imaginary partner, she danced on and on until exhausted she sank down with the feeling, *this is not right*.

Mother was mature for her age, and understanding. She was heavyhearted and longed to know that she was indeed a child of God. One October day, when she felt that she could carry her burden no longer, she slipped off to the apple orchard and threw herself down to pray—just a little girl pillowed on the bosom of God's great universe of growing things. She knew how to talk to the God of the fields and the flowers and ripening fruit. So there under the apple tree she poured out her heart to Him, telling Him how she longed to be converted, and confessing to Him her secret burden.

Mother has always been a woman of dynamic faith and experience. It was evinced in her conversion which washed over her as waters of an artesian spring. She leaped to her feet and went running home to her mother.

"I'm saved!" she cried, "I'm saved!"

Then in the midst of her joy she turned and went upstairs to put her conversion to the test. She was alone. The time was perfect. She stood before the mirror, and as she stood there, lo, the joy of her salvation welled up within her.

When Mother was seeking the experience of sanctification in San Jose, she was stymied by the question of God's will. She feared it so, not knowing where it might lead her. At length she yielded herself in utter

surrender to the holy will of God. She knows exactly what she is talking about when she sings:

*I struggled and wrestled to win it,
The blessing which setteth me free.
But when I had ceased from my struggling,
His peace, Jesus gave unto me.*

The day following this glorious experience of sanctification, at the regular Sunday morning service in Father's church, he asked Mother to come forward and give her testimony. Mother did not take into account that she was speaking in public. She was just telling what great things the Lord had done for her. She told it better than even Father had expected. Her testimony swept that congregation like a breath from heaven.

The official board of the church was disturbed. What could be done about this thing that had set their church on fire from pastor to congregation! A meeting of the deacons and elders was called to consider the problem.

The ruling elder was one of the rich men of San Jose. He loved horseflesh as well as the next, and before he was converted he had profited greatly by raising and racing the horses. When the deacons and elders had deliberated at length, pro and con, he arose.

"Men," he said, "I agree with you that we might dispose of this question of sanctification by saying that members of our church who are professing it, Mrs. This and Mr. That, from the president of the Missionary Society on down, were either converted or probably greatly blessed. But the problem still remains, 'What are we going to do with Mrs. McClurkan's testimony?'"

Father knew what to do with that testimony. He let her use it to the glory of God. From California to Tennessee, from Arizona to Texas, on that two-year evangelistic tour out of California, he gave her opportunity to

testify. Sometimes, after the song service, he would ask Mother to come to the front and give a word of testimony and at the conclusion he would extend the altar call, so that Mother, without realizing it, had in truth held the service. In ways like this he taught and trained her, and drew her out.

Along with this gift of testimony, Mother was demonstrating a marked aptitude for prayer. She was evincing, even then, those strong prayer habits which have made her unique in her prayer life. Father took notice of this, too, and began calling on her to pray in public. She did. She prayed the glory down. She prayed seekers through to God, and in her private life scads of people beaten by the storms of life have taken shelter under the pavillion of her prayer and faith.

"To hear you praying for us poor sinners," writes Dr. S. from his Presbyterian church in the East, "always brought to me some sort of a hope that even I might some day be a Christian."

It was in Charlotte, Tennessee, where Father was conducting a revival shortly before he located in Nashville, that he said to Mother, "Will you speak at the afternoon service?"

"Speak! Why I would not have the least idea what to say."

"Just say on your feet the things you say on your knees."

So Mother deliberately held her first service. From then on, Father placed her in charge of children's services and afternoon services. Then he turned her loose. In the great outspreading camp meetings in Texas, where acres of people were in attendance and the tents reached out into veritable white cities, Father turned the overflow services over to Mother. I wonder if we will see such sights again! The auditorium tent or shed was

jammed to capacity, a wall of people standing feet deep around it while those who could not come close enough to see or hear milled about on the grounds amid the tents and vehicles. Then it was that Mother mounted an improvised rostrum which Father had provided, and preached to literally thousands in the open air of Texas.

Dr. S. continues, ". . . then you stepped forward and gave us sinners standing around one of the best invitations to come to Christ ever given by any preacher. We knew from the tones of your voice that you were making a strong effort to help us. To this day, after associating with thousands of preachers and participating with them in all sorts of meetings in pretty well every state in the Union, I do not think I have ever known one with so great a gift for open-air preaching as you."

Mother always said that she made "just talks," but between us, she held the best preachers a close second. This was not accidental. When she was eight years of age, a remarkable gentleman with premature white hair and a long white beard came to the house. He had in his hands the most beautiful book Mother had ever seen. Even the prospectus was thick and heavy and there was something in the way the man held it and handled it that told you that the book was The Book even before you read on its elaborate binding the gilt words, Holy Bible.

The inside of the Book proved to be even more wonderful than its ornate outside. There were scattered through it pictures of Daniel in the lion's den, David and Goliath, the Nativity, and the three wise men—pictures like that. The fascinating visitor made these stories live. He captivated the family cluttered about him with the way he read the words of the Book and explained them. They had a Bible but no such Bible as this. Grandfather gave the man his order, paid cash for it, and watched him ride away on his horse.

"Did you catch his name, Tom?" Grandmother asked.

"Didn't have to catch it, Frances. Everybody knows John McClurkan, the Cumberland Presbyterian preacher over the way."

But Mother was not listening; her eyes were glued to the Book.

One of Grandfather's Sunday morning exercises was to read this Bible, enough of it to last him throughout the week. When he closed it, and had placed it carefully on the table, Mother would drag its weight onto her small lap and with her heels hitched over the rung of a chair for extra support she read the Bible. She could pronounce very few of the words. But she opened it anyway, and fingered its pages, and read aloud so that the sound of it fell like a pebble into the underground recesses of her mind and rippled to the shores of her personality. Her favorite passages when she was small were the "Verilies," as she called them. When Jesus said "Verily, I say unto you," Mother felt that He was voicing something very important although she could not comprehend it.

After her conversion, she read with more understanding, for she had *experienced* a part of the Book. There was light in her eye. The experience of sanctification was the match that lighted the lamp of her larger understanding and made the Bible, from that day, a new Book to her. For many years she has read the Bible through each year, sometimes reading it through on her knees, thus bowing humbly at the feet of the Great Teacher. Yes, Mother has majored in Bible. The product of the Book, its principles, its philosophies, its beauty, its cadences, she has assimilated into her personality through the instrument of a cleansed mind and a pure heart. Touch it at any point and she can tell you what the Book says. Watch her life and you will understand what

the Book means. Mother held her own with those preachers because she knew her Bible and preached it.

At the Assembly which met in Nashville in 1921, Dr. H. F. Reynolds, then General Superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene, requested Mother to receive ordination, an honor she neither sought nor expected but humbly received at the hands of this servant of God. And today her name is on the honored roll of retired ministers of the denomination.

Mother sums up the whole matter by saying, "It was your father, my dear. He looked down through a heap of rubbish and saw a spark of talent that God could use and multiply. Yes," she adds thoughtfully, "it was your father."

CHAPTER VI

GOD-CROWNED

The year 1914 flipped the page of the calendar with significant finger. Thirty-six years of service, seventeen of them lived in Nashville, had spun themselves out for Father along an orbit which recognized only one boundary, What more can I do? It was at the close of a busy August day. Father had palletted himself down on the lush green grass of the eighty-acre site which had been purchased recently for Trevecca College on Gallatin Road. He was viewing for the last time the boys' dormitory which he was pushing to completion, for within a few short weeks students would be coming from many directions to sit at the feet of this man of God. They came. But Father went to his eternal reward on the opening day of school, September 16, having closed in death his God-crowned ministry.

Like his Master, he died young and left the continuation of his work in the hands of others whom he had trained. Many out of their sorrow said that he had died too soon, before his work was done. Let's see. Father's passing came at the end of a very definite era in the history of the Holiness Movement, which movement, even then, was in a transitional period and was passing swiftly into its second phase—that of denominationalism. A wind was blowing out of the west. Father did not belong to this new era. He was truly a prophet of the pioneer stage. A part of that unfettered upsurge that gathered itself under tents and sheds and in tabernacles to preach the whosoever-willness of its message.

Father believed that the only bar to church membership should be its only entrance, the door of the new

birth. He disagreed with many devout holiness leaders, who pressed him for denominational union, because they set up as *bars* those conditions which Father heartily agreed should not obtain in the life of the believer, but should be left, so he thought, to the office work of the Holy Spirit in His searching and trustworthy dealings with the souls of His children.

The doctrine of the Pentecostal Mission, which was a simple statement of belief in line with the fundamentals of the Protestant denominations, differed from them in two essentials. It stressed the necessity, not only of the new birth, but of the sanctification of the believer as well, a doctrine which had been voiced in many of the creeds of the churches, especially that of the Methodist, but had lost its emphasis.

The Pentecostal Mission taught, also, the premillenium theory of the second coming of Christ. This teaching of our Lord's return was very close to Father's heart. He saw in it the heart-warming expectancy of the Church. The alert which kept the Christian busy burnishing his lamp. The hope deep within him by which he purified himself. The Culmination. The Great Fulfillment! Therefore he was hesitant to subscribe to any creed which did not embrace a clear statement on this issue.

But the wind which was blowing out of the West was gathering force and volume and was destined to sweep the main bloc of the Holiness Movement into the newly organized Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene, one of the fastest, if not *the* fastest, growing denominations in America today.

In the year 1911, Father had invited the General Assembly of this young church, which was then emerging into the family of denominations, to meet with the annual convention of the Pentecostal Mission in Nashville so that the burning question of uniting the holiness people into one great body, a question that had been under

discussion since 1907 with constantly growing interest, might be presented and further discussed.

They came, not only in the power of the experience they advocate, but in the ecstasy of the genesis of a great movement, and in the joy of first generation members. Leaders, whose names are sacred in Nazarene history today, were in attendance, Dr. P. F. Bresee, the founder; Dr. E. F. Walker, Bud Robinson, H. F. Reynolds, and many others.

Trevecca College was filled to capacity with members of the two delegations. The holiness people throughout the city offered their homes to take care of the overflow. Father's home, which was always closed throughout the school term, was thrown open and the McClurkan daughters have long remembered the genial, hale and hearty flock of Nazarene preachers whom they entertained there. Nobody was on diet, and the feathery southern biscuit, which many professed they had not tasted before, melted away in batches.

Throughout the joint sessions there was an over-all spirit of good will and fellowship among the two groups and their leaders. And, above all, there was a unified desire to know and do the will of God.

Father's idea was that the people of the Pentecostal Mission organization might be fully informed as to the denominational trend and, if the Pentecostal Mission should vote not to go into the church as a body, that any mission or missions which felt led of God to withdraw from the Pentecostal Mission and unite force with the Nazarene church, should do so, and God bless them.

No organic union was consummated at that time, but the year following Father's death, 1915, this church swung under the Foreign Missionary branch of the Pentecostal Mission, and the Pentecostal Mission organization united with the church as a body. Mother and the

greater part of Father's congregation wrote their names as charter members of the First Church of the Nazarene in Nashville, Tennessee. Trevecca College which, under the able management of an only son and faculty member, Dr. E. L. McClurkan, had weathered the shock of Father's loss, passed into the hands of the church also. A great leader, indeed, had fallen, but the work which he had founded and to which he had given his life flowed on along another channel of God's choosing.

There was a sermon Father preached near the close of his ministry. "What Is Truth?" He stood in his pulpit, tall and Abraham Lincolnish, his gray hair falling back from his classic forehead. His entire personality bore the divine impress, heaven's trade-mark, a sort of unearthiness. Remembering, I know that the words which fell from Father's lips that day were the result of the long search of his own questing soul for truth. He often reached it ahead of his fellows, and people said that he lived ahead of his day. This must be true. Many years after Father's death, Mother was attending a revival in one of the Nazarene churches in Nashville which was conducted by a visiting minister who was outstanding in the holiness work. He preached that morning on the subject of "Growth in the Sanctified Life." At the close of the service the minister came to Mother and said, "Mrs. McClurkan, as far as I know, I am the first holiness preacher to speak along this line."

"Oh, no," replied Mother. "My husband taught that many years ago."

Indeed it was this teaching that brought down upon Father's unsuspecting head the violent criticism of some of the recognized leaders of the Holiness Movement of his day. In spite of it, however, Father went right along teaching, as he had always done, that the experience of sanctification is an instantaneous work of grace wrought

in the heart of the Christian by an act of faith, subsequent to regeneration.

"But," said he, "the entrance into the sanctified life, while it cleanses the *heart*, does not perfect the *character*. There is a distinction between a perfect heart—one in which there is nothing that opposes God, but is fully set to do His will—and a perfect character."

"One is acquired in a moment," he pointed out. "The other is a process."

Father was honest with truth. He did not preach something because it was popular to do so. Rather, he sifted it and pondered it. One day as I was riding alone with him I asked him shyly, little dreaming that I was stepping into the pool of his own troubled thought, "Father, why is it that the lives of some of the holiness people do not measure up to their profession?"

He was silent so long that I wondered if he had heard me. Then he said, "Keep your eyes on Christ, my child." That was as far into the answer as he had gone himself.

Father might have taken refuge and comfort in the moth-eaten cloak of hypocrites. But he did not. He knew hypocrites for what they are, a fungus growth not only upon religion, but hanging like moss on a tree to everything worth while. He did not bother to mention them. Instead he held my eyes to the Perfect Image until such time as he could amplify his answer. That time came.

He said, "Numerous have been the disappointments of earnest and devout souls in expecting to obtain in the *act* of sanctification those qualities that belong to the developing and maturing of sanctified character. Hence, many people let down in their lives while still holding on to the profession. The failure to properly guard this point has been a weakness in much of the teaching of the holiness people."

"But," added Father, with the steady glow of conviction in his eye, "if not one person lived the life—thank God many of them do—I would still believe in the truth of it because I see the doctrine of sanctification so clearly taught in the Bible."

Father loved this old world with all its kinds of people and his ministering work which reached out to help them. But it was not all roses. Opposition to the teaching of sanctification was bitter in places. It brought him loneliness for a time, for many of the preachers who were near to him shied away from the teaching or fought it outright. The folks, however, who gave him the most trouble were not those outsiders who opposed holiness. They were to be expected. His enemies, and he had a few, were peculiarly his own. People in his own ranks. Someone whom he had helped through some period of adversity and who, by some quirk of human nature, turned the experience into a source of bitterness, a root of jealousy, to be used against him. Or, his own brethren in the gospel who misunderstood or misinterpreted his message. He had his crown of thorns.

Sometimes we children fought his battles for him vocally, in a small private dining room which we occasionally used after Father established his school. I can see him now sitting at the head of the table with his nose in the air like a fine-blooded dog when he gets a whiff of something he does not relish. But he had the good sense to let us blow off our youthful steam in the privacy of the family rather than take chances on its exploding where it was likely to do more damage. When we had had our say, he would speak up and give us in a nutshell an explanation that would be filled with the very essence of brotherly love.

I recall one particular instance when we were especially wrought upon. We tore the offender verbally

limb from limb. When we had finished him off, Father spoke.

"Children," he said, "I am convinced in my own mind that our friend, who has wounded you so deeply, has a *kink* in his brain."

We lived to see the truth of his statement.

One of the keys to Father's character was this understanding and his brotherly feeling for all classes of people. There was no high and low. He was a son, and as a son felt his responsibility to the family of humanity.

One day I was leaving the dining room of Trevecca College when Father appeared in the doorway with a tramp at his side.

"Daughter, seat our brother at the table, and see that his dinner is served," he said as graciously as if he were entertaining royalty.

Carrie A. Nation came to Nashville once upon a time when she was at the height of her saloon-smashing career. She was to speak in the Ryman Auditorium. I recall that the immense building was crowded to capacity. The ladies of the W. C. T. U. were present in semicircles, on the platform. But they would not introduce Mrs. Nation. They simply could not be placed in the position of sponsoring her methods. They did, however, send to the speaker's desk a gorgeous bouquet of red roses.

Father had no roses, neither did he possess any fear of her methods, so as the time for Carrie Nation to speak approached he stepped from the wings to the platform.

How he loathed pompous introductions—the popularly styled "Mr. Who This and Mr. Who That, who did this, that, and the other!" Instead, he said briefly, "It is my privilege to introduce to you, our sister, Carrie A. Nation."

Round after round of applause racked that old building as a little woman all dressed in black, with a short ruffled cape about her shoulders and a small black hat on her head, stepped to the platform.

When it was all over, Father housed her at Trevecca College and turned the place over to her. The next night she spoke in the Pentecostal Mission tabernacle and people were all but sticking out of the rafters.

Carrie Nation left the following day, but father's words and attitude, "our sister," still stick in my memory and pay tribute to so great a man.

In Kentucky there is a fabric of home mission work, the texture of which so closely resembles Father's. It reaches to the homes far back into the mountains. It maintains outpost Sunday schools in the various mountain communities. It builds on the hill the house of God and teaches the Bible non-sectarianly in the rural schools. Throughout the summer it gathers the mountain children into daily Vacation Bible School, so that the fabric becomes, indeed, the garment of the gospel to a very needy people.

This work did not *have* to be. It *is* because Father's mantle fell upon him, and an only son reaches out beyond the boundaries of his Presbyterian pastorate to include a neglected mountain people in the saving work of the gospel.

A young Methodist preacher, almost just a boy, was standing recently at the chancel of his church receiving a group of seventy-five members into the church. It was a solemn sight to see them, many of them mature men and women, kneeling for baptism and seeking membership in the church on profession of faith. When this portion of the service had been concluded, one of the older stewards of the church arose.

He said, "A sight such as this has not been seen in the Winchester, Tennessee, Methodist Church since the revival meeting in 1911 when our young pastor's grandfather, J. O. McClurkan, received a like number of members into this church at a single service."

Thus it is that his children and his grandchildren join hands with the many who have gone out from his presence and his training and crown his life with acceptable service to his Master, and theirs.

Off the streets of Nashville came a little urchin to stand a moment by Father's side as his body lay in the tabernacle a few hours before the funeral. He stood there dirty and silent against a background of flowers which had been wreathed into clouds of blended color.

"Lady," he sobbed at length, lifting his tear-streaked face to Mother, "he was a *good man*."

Many beautiful tributes have been paid to Father's life by those who knew and loved him, but the untutored words which fell that day from the lips of the little street urchin hold in their simplicity the very essence of the man. *He was a good man!*

The most comprehensive, if the briefest, biography which could be written of Father is expressed in the single word which Mother had carved on the granite slab that marks his resting place—the all-inclusive word, "OTHERS."

Once someone gave Mother a little plant. She did not know what it was, as it was different from all the growing things with which she surrounded her life. So she watched it grow with keener interest. When the stem of the plant began to bend and curve, Mother took a smooth stick and propped the plant on its leaning side. So the plant struggled upward as best it could. In time there appeared on the plant a tiny thorn and close by

the thorn a blood-red flower, until the plant was covered with them.

An onlooker stood one day studying the plant, puzzled. What could it be? Then exclaimed, "The Crown of Thorns!"

"It's the stick," he cried, "the stick has stolen away its meaning! The stick has taken out of it the crown!"

Father's life, like the little plant, had a natural bent—a bent for God. He allowed no false props but yielded himself in glad surrender to the will of God, and God's spirit coursing through him as the sap in the plant, built his life into rugged beauty, a life of sacrifice and fruitage. A thorn and a flower.