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The Christian Drummer

Unknown author

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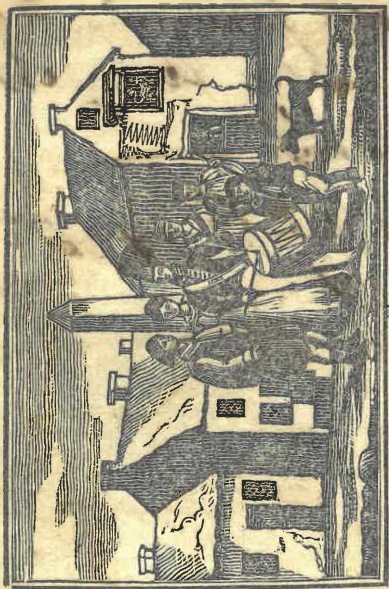
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Eliza Fades

Book presented to her
by Sally Avery School
Master

Oct. 7th 1825

" " " "



See p. 5.

(No. 4.)

THE
CHRISTIAN DRUMMER,

GIVING AN ACCOUNT

OF WHAT HAPPENED IN A TOWN

IN SCOTLAND,

WHERE HE WAS STATIONED.



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THE
TRUE AND INTERESTING STORY
OF A
DRUMMER.

In the summer of 1800, when travelling in Scotland with Mr. H——, preaching in the various towns and villages which we visited: arriving at a considerable town in the south, we stopped at the principal inn. After dinner, we requested the master of the inn to send for the bell-man of the town, to give notice of a sermon for the evening. In about a quarter of an hour he reported that neither the bell-man nor boy were at home. In a little time he returned, to tell us he had seen a drummer belonging to an English regiment then stationed in the town, whom he had asked to give notice of the sermon, and that he was gone to the commanding officer to obtain his permission. In a short time the drummer, about forty years of age, came into our room, wearing a large Hungarian cap. He told us that the commanding officer had no objection to his giving notice of the sermon, and asked us what he should say. We desired him to inform the inhabitants that there would be a sermon preached in the middle of the town precisely at seven o'clock in the evening.

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When he was gone, we went out to take a walk along the banks of the river, which ran at the back of one of the streets. When we came to a part of the river, where there was only a high wall between us and the street, the drummer beat his drum behind it. We stopped to overhear what he would say. After intimating what we had desired him, he made the following address :

“ Now, my friends, I hope you will all come and hear this sermon. The Gospel is to be preached as free as from the lips of Jesus Christ himself; for there is to be no collection. Ho! every one that thirsteth, and he that hath no money, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”

On hearing such a notice given, we looked at each other with considerable surprise, and remarked, that we certainly should have a large congregation; which was the case. The drummer was the only soldier present, owing to the evening parade being at the same hour, in the skirts of the town; but the commanding officer had said to him, “ John, as you are to give notice of this sermon, I suppose you would like to hear it, so you need not attend parade to-night, but go and hear the sermon.”

After the sermon, we invited the drummer to call upon us at the inn. When he came, Mr. H——— offered him two shillings for his trouble, in giving the notice. He looked rather surprised at being offered any remuneration, and said, “ Sir, I will not have money. I am as much interested in the propagation of the Gospel as you are. I never went with so

much pleasure through a town with my drum in all my life ; we have been lying here six or seven weeks, and I have not found one Christian yet in the whole town. I thought when you were to preach, ' Now God may perhaps convert some of these people by this sermon.' We have two short sermons in this town on the Sabbath ; I do not know what is preached, but sure I am that it is not the Gospel."

We then asked him to sup with us. He answered, " I must go and consult my wife ; if she has no objection, I am sure I have none." He returned in a few minutes, when we placed him at the head of the table. Then we requested that as many of the family, &c. as could attend worship, would come up stairs. The family, waiters, servants, hostlers, and two or three ladies from the neighbourhood, attended. As usual, we read a chapter in the Bible, gave a short address from it to the company present, and went to prayer.

After supper, we requested the drummer to favour us with his history, which he did with great modesty, in the following words, which are nearly his own.

" I have been," said he, " twenty four years in the Navy and Army together. Till four years ago, I was the wickedest wretch in either. Our regiment was then lying at Hull. I was seized with an unaccountable melancholy ; it was not about religion ; I do not know what it was, but I was miserable. One evening, as I was walking on the common very unhappy, I observed a church lighted up, which convinced me there was to be a sermon preach-

ed in it, but I durst not go, lest my comrades should laugh at me, for attending a sermon on a week day. I knelt down on the common, and



prayed to God to give me courage to go to church. The minister was preaching on believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Immediately, when I was seated, the minister said, 'If it could be of the smallest service to the meanest person present, I would come down from the pulpit, and on my bended knees beseech that person to believe on the Lord Jesus.' Thought I, this must be a mighty matter, surely, that a gentleman would come down from the pulpit, and on his bended knees beseech a poor drummer to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. That, with the remainder of his sermon, made a deep impression on my mind. I went home to my wife. She met me at the door. I said to her, 'Jane, we are all wrong; we are living like beasts, we know nothing about believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.' Poor thing! she trembled, for she thought I had lost my reason;

but, said I, 'Jane, I am not mad; but you and I are going to destruction. I understand that the Bible will tell us every thing; but we have not a Bible; and if we had, we cannot read it.' 'Oh,' said she, 'we can buy a Bible, and our little boy, who is only twelve miles off, can read it to us.' Accordingly we sent for our boy, and also bought a Bible. When he came home, we desired him to begin at the first page, and go forward to the end of the book. We often gave him two suppers, to keep him from sleep, for he got drowsy with reading.

"I used to rise very early in the morning, to hear more of the Bible; but I would say, it is cruel to wake my boy so early, and would give him another hour of sleep. Then he arose, and began to read where he had stopped the preceding night; and we both sat listening to our boy reading the book. He read slow, for he had many words to spell. At length God opened my poor blind eyes, to see that Jesus Christ was the very Saviour that I stood in need of. O how happy I was! Our boy read onward, and, after some time, the Lord was pleased to open the poor blind eyes of my wife, so that she saw in Jesus Christ just what I saw. Now we became one of the happiest families in all Hull.

"I put myself to school, that I might learn to read, and in a few months I was able to read nearly as well as my little boy. I determined that my house should be a house of prayer, and my door open to all who should choose to come. I told my comrades that I had now begun to pray to God and read his

word every morning and evening, and that I should be glad of their company. Several attended to make sport: when I could not make out a long word, then they all laughed; but I thought, 'Now a few months ago I should have laughed at these things as well as they; but if God open their eyes as he has mine, they will laugh no more at such things.' I read on as well as I was able. By and by some of them became very serious; but drink and wicked company did them much injury. One of them, however, remains very steadfast to this day."

Mr. H—— had given notice after his sermon, that I should preach at the same place next morning precisely at nine o'clock. This, unknown to us, was the place and hour of parade every morning. At the officers' mess in the evening, a waiter whispered to one of the officers at table, that there was to be a sermon on the parade ground next morning, and a congregation to hear the sermon. "I think," said the officer, "we shall have no parade, but shall go with our men and hear the sermon;" which they did accordingly.

It is probable that all this countenance given to the preaching of the Gospel, proceeded from the prudent conduct of the pious drummer. Much of the private opposition made to the Gospel, has arisen from the imprudent conduct of some of its professors.

The history of this drummer can hardly be read without interest, at the same time it may be read without accomplishing the design of its publication. If it does not produce a desire

to obtain better acquaintance with God, and the way of salvation, by means of the Scriptures of truth, it has been of little service to the reader.

It was well for the drummer that he followed the advice of the minister; many would have excused themselves, by saying, they could not read, and therefore a Bible would not be useful to them; but the drummer was in earnest about the matter; he could not have peace of mind, till he heard what God had made known in the Holy Scriptures. Had he not had a child of his own who could read, he would probably have hired the child of some other person to read to him. When people are in earnest about a thing, it is wonderful what difficulties they will overcome in order to acquire it; like a person having property left by a deceased friend, should the will happen to be in Latin, which he could not read, would he not soon find ways and means to obtain a translation, that he might know the nature and extent of the property left him? Undoubtedly he would.

Now the glorious Gospel of the blessed God contains a revelation of his love and mercy to the world—of a full and free salvation from sin and misery, an elevation to glory and happiness for ever, through Jesus the only begotten Son of God—and an assurance that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to men their trespasses, for the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. All this, and the evidence of its truth, is exhibited in the Scriptures, in the most plain, full, and sat-

isfactory manner, and every one is called upon to search and see this salvation of God; but the man who neglects the means within his reach, for obtaining acquaintance with so great salvation, is considered by God as despising his grace and shall be miserable for ever.

Though the drummer was no coward, yet when he knew his danger as a sinner against God, he was greatly alarmed, and had no peace till he obtained some hope of mercy through Jesus Christ. A braver man than David, king of Israel, never breathed; many a successful battle did he fight at the head of his armies; but he trembled at sin, as an offence against the infinite Majesty of heaven: he knew well it was a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God.

Friendly Reader, have you seen your danger as a guilty creature? If you have, lose no time in coming to God through Jesus Christ for mercy; for now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation: to-morrow it may be gone for ever!—therefore seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; make mention of the righteousness of Jesus, and of his only, in all your approaches to a holy, heart-searching, and righteous God.

Tho' his Majesty be great,
His mercy is no less;
Tho' he thy transgressions hate,
He feels for thy distress.
By himself the Lord hath sworn,
"He delights not in thy death;"
But invites thee to return,
That thou mayest live by faith.

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Pious Education.

Let children hear the mighty deeds
Which God perform'd of old ;
Which in our younger years we saw,
And which our fathers told.

He bids us make his glories known ;
His works of power and grace ;
And we'll convey his wonders down,
Through every rising race.

Our lips shall tell them to our sons,
And they again to theirs ;
That generations yet unborn
May teach them to their heirs.

Thus shall they learn in God alone
Their hope securely stands ;
That they may ne'er forget his works,
But practise his commands.

