

CHAPTER XLII

My Fourth and Last Visit to Europe—Continued. Severe Illness and Recovery. Invitation to Lecture in Holland Accepted. A Week in Paris. Germany Visited. The Pulpit and Tomb of Luther. Return to Canada. The Close of this Book and of Life's Voyage.

I cannot undertake to give a detailed account of my work in Great Britain during my last trip there; suffice it to say that eight days after my arrival, more than a hundred invitations had been received from my English friends, to go and deliver them the message which the good Master wanted me to proclaim.

On December 22, 1896, I had already given eighty-two public addresses to multitudes which very often could not be accommodated in the large halls or churches where I spoke in London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Brighton, etc.

But on December 22d, after two days of lecturing in Norwich, it was the will of God to stop my humble labours with a severe cold, which kept me in bed till April 22d, —just four months. Several times during those months my doctors told me: "We would hope to cure you very soon, if you were not so old. But with your eighty-eight years of age, the best thing you can do is to prepare yourself for the better life which is in store for the children of God."

These words were very wise, and I would have been very imprudent not to pay attention to them. However, it was the will of God to restore my health again, and on April 30th, I was enabled to give two lectures, without feeling any fatigue, to more than three thousand people, in the immense Queen's Hall of London, on the occasion of the annual meetings of the Protestant Alliance of England.

But the physicians told me that for a thorough restoration

of my health, I needed a change of atmosphere, and as I was consequently contemplating my return to America, I received an invitation from the Rev. H. J. Schouten, of Ommeren, Holland, to visit his country, where he said I had many friends desirous of hearing me. This invitation, which was not in the least anticipated, seemed to me providential, affording me the three-fold opportunity of proclaiming the truth, of following the advice of my physician and of visiting that interesting people whose grand history I had so greatly admired, especially in connection with the struggle for the cause of civil and religious liberty, when the mighty and tyrannical Philip II. of Spain failed to crush that small but heroic people. It was then my privilege and my unspeakable joy to address the disciples of the Gospel who filled with their multitudes the immense and beautiful churches of Rotterdam, The Hague, Harlem, Amsterdam, Utrecht, Anhalt, Apeldorn, Leyden. I was thus lecturing among that most hospitable, kind and earnest people during the whole month of April, speaking sometimes through an interpreter, and part of the time directly to the audience in French or in English, many of the people of that country being highly educated and speaking three languages. The ministers seemed to vie with each other to manifest tokens of respect and friendship.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to the Rev. Mr. Schouten, who put forth such earnest efforts for the extension and success of my work, and also to his worthy brother, a lawyer who resides at The Hague.

At that time there was quite a political campaign going on in Holland. One of the parties to which the Romanists mostly belonged, hoped to influence the Protestants that belonged to another party to join them, so that they would be sure to win the day. But in that the Romanists failed, and they themselves ascribed that result to the influence of my lectures.

But on the 31st of May, some important affairs in the in-

terest of the Gospel having called me to Paris, I was obliged to go from Holland to France.

When in that brilliant capital of the French people, I had the joy to meet my daughter Rebecca and her husband, the Rev. Mr. Morin, who had come to that great centre to enjoy the educational advantages it affords.

I spent a week with my dear children, and during that time, besides sight-seeing and many visits to places of interest, I addressed the Coligny Society of Colonization which is especially interested in promoting the immigration of Protestants to Algeria. By special request, I spoke of my colonization in Illinois. My few remarks aroused patriotic sentiments among the members of that society when they learned that one of my primary objects in founding that colony was to foster the interest of the French nation in America. I was, on the spot, elected an honorary member of the society.

One of the most pleasant recollections of my short stay in Paris this time is the great pleasure I had in meeting Mr. Eugène Réveillaud, whom I found to be a most warm and attentive friend. He took great pains in entertaining us at Versailles, where he resides. He arranged for meetings upon my return to Paris in July, but, as it will be seen, hereafter I could not fulfil these engagements on account of previous invitations in England.

As many German friends had invited me to go and visit them, I left Paris on the 7th of June for Germany. The next day it was my privilege to see and admire the marvelous Cathedral of Cologne, and on the 9th of June I enjoyed the Christian hospitality of one of the most learned and pious ministers of the Gospel in Germany, the Rev. A. Schneider, in the celebrated city of Magdeburg.

It is known that that city had been destroyed and entirely burned by the Jesuits in the days of the Reformation, to punish its inhabitants, who had broken the yoke of the Pope in order to follow the Gospel which Luther had given them.

But since that time they have rebuilt it on a more splendid scale.

A public open-air meeting had been prepared in that city to hear the Gospel message they had asked me to give.

It seemed, at first, a great imprudence to deliver a long address in an open-air meeting, in the very heart of the city; but though my address lasted an hour, no injury came to me. It was the contrary—I have never enjoyed better health since I gave to those multitudes the Gospel food my God had ordered me to dispense to them.

The next day it was my joy—my unspeakable joy—to go and visit the tombs where Luther and Melancthon are resting from their labours, at Wittenberg. How can I express my feeling and emotion when in that beautiful and celebrated church, where the hero whom God had chosen to strike down the modern Goliath, had so often made his thundering voice heard!

No; no words can tell what I felt when in the very pulpit of Luther I made the echoes of the church repeat the beautiful words of David: "O my soul, bless the Lord, and let all that is within me bless His holy name."

It seemed I heard from the tombs of Luther and Melancthon a mysterious voice uniting to mine, saying: "O my soul, bless the Lord, and let all that is within me bless His holy name."

I would have to say many things about what I have seen with my eyes and touched with my hands in that celebrated city of Wittenberg, the blessed cradle of the Reformation; but it would be only the repetition of the story which all the tourists have to tell who have seen the same city. However, I may say that I did not like to leave that historical spot without carrying with me, as a precious relic, some of the earth I had taken from the tomb of Luther.

I had to hasten my return to England, as the Rev. Mr. Sterling and other friends had arranged for a few lectures they wished me to give before my departure for Canada.

My passage, with that of my daughter and son-in-law, was secured for the 8th of July on the "Parisian." What joy I anticipated at seeing again my dear and beautiful Canada after more than ten months absence!

But before leaving England I thought it proper to publish an address of farewell to my Christian friends there, together with those of Scotland and Ireland, part of which I insert here:

"I cannot leave your hospitable shores without thanking and blessing you for the numberless acts of kindness by which you have overwhelmed me these last ten months. Our merciful God alone can pay the debt of gratitude I owe you. May that merciful heavenly Father pour upon you the richest treasures of His mercies for what you have just done to me, His old, unprofitable servant.

"I will not leave your hospitable shores without telling you again: Beware of the Jesuits! and still more, beware of the traitors in your midst under the name of Ritualists or High Church party! they are the agents of the enemy of your liberties to bring England back under the heavy and degrading yoke of Popery. If you want to bequeath to your children the glorious Gospel which your heroic ancestors have purchased with their own blood, gird your loins and fearlessly prepare yourselves to fight again the battles of the Reformation.

"The Pope of Rome, with his armies of Jesuits, priests, nuns, cardinals, approaches you to-day with smiling lips and honeyed words,—just as Delilah did with Samson,—but do not forget how this giant of old was punished for trusting himself to the perfidious Philistine girl.

"Rome has not changed: she cannot change. The Rome of to-day is the Rome that planned the Gunpowder Plot, built and manned the 'Invincible Armada,' and reddened your soil with the blood of your noble ancestors.

"But to fulfil your grand and sublime mission, it is not enough to fight Rome; you have something better to do: it is to convert the Roman Catholics.

“Do not forget that you have a whole nation in Canada which God Almighty granted you to conquer that you might bring them to the dear Saviour’s feet. You have already done much to help our Canadian missions to reflect the light of the Gospel into the midst of the terrible darkness with which Popery has covered my dear native country—Canada. But the work is not yet finished. It is true that we feel an unspeakable joy when we consider that there are at least 30,000 French-Canadian Roman Catholics who these last fifty years have broken the heavy yoke of the Pope to follow Christ. But we have still more than two millions who are at the feet of the idols of Rome, and who are adoring a god made with a wafer baked by the servants of the priests of Rome.

“Divided we perish; united we stand. Let us unite our prayers as well as our efforts, and the God of the Gospel will give us the victory over the common foe. The stronghold of Popery in Canada will be brought into dust, the French-Canadian people will be wrenched from the hands of the enemy, and we will, during all eternity, bless the Lord for having granted us the privilege and honour of doing something for that glorious and blessed work.”

After a most enjoyable voyage, brightened by a beautiful sun and enlivened by most pleasant company, we arrived in Montreal on the 18th of July, experiencing the truthfulness of the most touching English song:—

Home! home! sweet, sweet home!
There’s no place like home!

Now, dear readers, I bring my book to a close.

In it I have endeavoured to state and enforce the truth as I find it in the Gospels and the writings of the inspired apostles.

This truth I have been preaching for forty years, ever since I received the full light.

I loved the truth as such from the bottom of my heart and I have not consciously varied from it a particle in my teaching.

Nothing can do us the highest good except the simple truth as revealed in God's Holy Word. This is the medicine and food of the soul, not the traditions and inventions of fallible men. The blessed Saviour prayed: "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth." We cannot be saved by mere *churchianity* but by Christianity.

As to matters of fact stated in this volume, I have not knowingly varied in the least degree from the truth. My readers can judge for themselves, and arrive at conclusions.

My work on earth is now coming to an end, and I must soon appear before my Judge, who knows all things, and who will do just right. My entire trust for salvation is in Christ as my Redeemer and Mediator.

I am now about to cross the river, I am just at the end of life's pilgrimage, rich with the unspeakable gift which has been given me, and pressing my dear Bible to my heart as the richest treasure, I hasten my steps with unspeakable joy towards the Land of Promise. I hear the angel's voice telling me: "Come, the Master calls thee."

My life has been lengthened out much beyond the average, being now in my ninetieth year. This has been prolonged by the good mercy of my Heavenly Father, so that I could do something in the cause of my Saviour, who has done so much for me.

I ascribe my long life under God to my abstaining from the use of intoxicating liquors, and general observance of the laws of health. No doubt my habitual state of mind has had a great influence on my bodily health. My strong confidence in my God and the peace and joy I have felt, springing from an abiding evidence of my acceptance with Him, have tended to promote health and length of days.

I am now ready to depart and be with my Lord. All my labours and trials seem insignificant in comparison with that eternal weight of glory which awaits me. I have no fear of death—it has no sting for me. Thanks be to God who gives me the victory over the last enemy through our Lord Jesus