

**LIFE OF
JOHN BUNYAN**

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Life of John Bunyan by Edmund Venables

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EDMUND VENABLES

**LIFE OF
JOHN BUNYAN**

"Great Writers."

EDITED BY

PROFESSOR ERIC S. ROBERTSON, M.A.

Vol. XX.

LIFE OF BUNYAN.

©

LIFE
OF
JOHN BUNYAN

BY
EDMUND VENABLES, M.A.
PRECENTOR AND CANON RESIDENTIARY OF LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

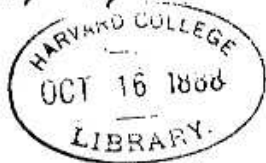
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NOTE.

A SERIES of biographies of "Great Writers" would necessarily be incomplete which failed to include the writer of what, next to the Bible, is probably the most extensively read book in the English language. If by a "Great Writer" we understand one who combines the power of expressing thoughts of universal acceptability in a style of the most perfect clearness, with a high degree of imaginative genius, and a vivid descriptive faculty; whose works are equally attractive to readers of all ages and every variety of mental culture, which are among the first to be taken up in the nursery and among the last to be laid down when life is closing in on us, which have filled the memory with pictures and peopled it with characters of the most unforgettable reality, which have been probably translated into more languages, and attained popularity in more lands, than any books ever written—then the claim of the author of "The Pilgrim's Progress," "The Holy War," and "Grace Abounding" to a place, and that a very high one, in the catalogue of "Great Writers," is undeniable.

After what has been written by such masters of the

biographical art as Southey, Macaulay, and Mr. Froude, and still more recently by Dr. Brown, by whom every available source of information regarding Bunyan has been ransacked, and whose painstaking accuracy is only surpassed by his modest reticence as to his own researches and the admirable skill with which the results of those researches have been framed in a lifelike picture of the times in which Bunyan lived,—any originality in a biography of the immortal Dreamer was impossible. Nothing more has been attempted in the present work than to arrange the available materials in a clear and intelligible form; where it has been possible allowing Bunyan to tell his own story in his own unapproachable English. Some apology might seem to be needed for the large extracts from former authors to be found in the present work. The writer may remark that his object has been to offer to his readers as true a portrait of Bunyan, and as faithful an estimate of his works, as was possible, and that when this could be done most effectually by quotations from the works of others whose authority was recognized in the world of letters, he has, without scruple, adopted this as the best method of attaining his object rather than by any feeble attempt at originality. His indebtedness to those who have gone before him, especially to Mr. Froude and Dr. Brown is evident throughout, and deserves to be, as it is, most gratefully acknowledged. He has also to thank Mr. Thorpe for generously putting at his disposal the recently-discovered warrant for Bunyan's apprehension, and his communication to the Society of Antiquarians, in elucidation of that most interesting document.

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