

**AN
AUTOBIOGRAPHY**

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An autobiography by John B. Gough

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BY

J O H N B. G O U G H.

'Egging drink! thou 'lt not enslave me;
Sparkling bowl! thou now art dim;
Angel Temperance stooped to save me
From the death within thy brim.'

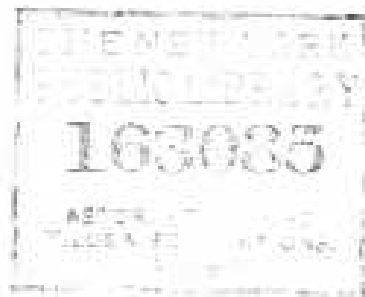
WILLIAM B. TAPPAN.

Third Thousand.

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DEDICATION.

TO JESSE W. GOODRICH,

Of Worcester,

WHOSE KINDNESS CHEERED AND SUPPORTED ME

When days were dark and friends were few!

AND TO

MOSES GRANT,

Of Boston,

OF WHOM IT MAY WITH TRUTH BE SAID, THAT

'To others he devoted his good.'

THIS NARRATIVE OF ONE,

WHO WILL EVER, WITH AFFECTIONATE GRATITUDE, REMEMBER THEIR GOOD,

IS INSCRIBED.



AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

BY JOHN B. GOUGH.

PART FIRST.

It may be asked by many individuals, whose eyes will fall on these pages, why I have thought it requisite to add one to the already numerous autobiographies extant? I answer, that justice to myself, in some measure, demands an explicit statement of the principal incidents in an hitherto eventful life; those incidents, or, at least, many of them, having, in frequent instances, been erroneously described by the press generally. Besides this, many who have heard my verbal narrations, have intimated a desire to become more fully acquainted with a career, which, although it has extended but little beyond a quarter of a century, has been fruitful of adventure. To gratify others, rather than myself, has been my object in reducing to a permanent form my somewhat eventful history. I make no pretensions to literary merit, and trust this candid avowal will disarm criticism. Mine is, indeed, a 'short and simple annal of the poor;' and if the perusal of these pages should cheer some fainting wanderer on the world's highway, and lead him far from the haunts of evil, by the still waters of temperance, my labor will have been well repaid. Truth constitutes the

merit of my tale, if it possess any merit; and most of us know that real life often furnishes stranger stories than romance ever dreamed of; and that facts are frequently more startling than fiction.

I was born on the twenty-second of August, 1817, at a romantic little watering-place, named Sandgate, in the county of Kent, England. My father had been a soldier in the fortieth and fifty-second regiment of foot, and was in the enjoyment of a pension of £20 per annum, having frequently fought during the Peninsular war, and been wounded in the neck. I remember as well as if it had been but yesterday, how he would go through military exercises with me, my mimic weapon being a broom, and my martial equipments some of his faded trappings. I was not destined, however, to see how fields were won. With what intense interest have I often listened to his descriptions of battle-fields, and how have I shuddered at contemplating the dreadful scenes which he so graphically portrayed. He was present at the memorable battle of Corunna, and witnessed its hero, Sir John Moore, carried from that fatal field. 'Here,' he would say, 'was such a regiment, — there such a battalion; in this situation was the enemy, — and yonder was the position of the general and his staff.' And then he would go on to describe the death of the hero, — his looks, and his burial near the ramparts, until my young heart would leap with excitement. Apart from such attractions as these, my father possessed few for a child. His military habits had become as a second nature with him. Stern discipline had been taught him in a severe school, and it being impossible for him to cast off old associations, he was not calculated to win the deep affections of a child, although, in every respect, he deserved and possessed my love. He received his discharge from the army in the year 1823.

My mother's character was cast in a gentler mould. Her heart was a fountain, whence the pure waters of affection never ceased to flow. Her very being seemed twined with mine, and ardently did I return her love. For the long space of twenty years she had occupied the then prominent position of schoolmistress in the village, and frequently planted the first principles of knowledge in the minds of children, whose parents had, years before, been benefited by her early instructions. And well qualified by nature and acquirements was she for the interesting but humble office she filled, if a kindly heart and a well-stored mind be the requisites. Of course, I received my first lessons at home; but as I advanced in years, it became advisable that I should be sent to a school, and to one I was accordingly sent. There was a free school in the village, but my father possessed too much independence to allow him to send me to a charity school, and, though he could ill afford it, paid a weekly sum for my instruction at the seminary of Mr. Davis, of Folkstone. I progressed rapidly in my limited education, and became a teacher in the school; two classes, as was the custom, were placed under my care; the children of one of them I initiated into the art and mystery of spelling words of two syllables, and taught the Rule of Three to a class more advanced.

As most boys will, I sometimes get into petty scrapes, and once narrowly escaped a serious disgrace. I occasionally gave the reins to a temper which was naturally passionate, and on a certain occasion, when the order of 'Teachers to your classes' was given, I exclaimed, 'I wish the classes were at the devil!' One of the boys reported my remark to the master, saying, 'Please, sir, I heard him.' He called me to him. I denied that I had uttered such words; but one boy, and another, and another asserting that