

**CAPTAIN ALLEN
GARDINER
OF PATAGONIA**

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Captain Allen Gardiner of Patagonia by Jesse Page

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JESSE PAGE

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BY

JESSE PAGE

AUTHOR OF "JAPAN AND ITS MISSIONS," ETC.

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P R E F A C E

SOME lives, radiant with high endeavour, are best remembered by the pathos of the things they failed to do. This is true of the man whose life is briefly sketched in the pages of this book. Never had the Truth a more chivalrous knight-errant. In his quest for the souls of men he bravely pressed through dark thickets of heathenism, fought the dragons of superstition and ignorance and fear long ; at last, with a song of triumph on his dying lips, seeing by a vision of faith the final victory.

In so many respects Gardiner reminds us of Gordon. His nature had the same marvellous union of strength and tenderness, with a like deep, underlying element of spirituality ; he, too, knew no fear, and possessed in a high degree a love of the forlorn hope. It was his destiny, as it was Gordon's, to deal single-

handed with the wild children of barbarism ; and, to press the comparison no further, Gardiner also perished heroically at the post of duty, waiting for the rescue which came, alas ! too late.

Hitherto, the life and labours of Captain Allen Gardiner have been associated almost exclusively with South America. That country was, of course, not only his latest but his most important sphere of work, for it led to the creation of the South American Missionary Society. But Africa, as well as America, was written on his heart.

Among the archives of that Society, so generously placed at my disposal in preparing this volume, is a journal which Gardiner issued in 1835, now of extreme rarity, and to be considered, in relation to this subject, a biographical " find." It not only describes with the vividness of an eye-witness the events of his three years' travel in Zululand, but also reveals the inner life and feelings of the writer. Half the original journal was lost, not like Gordon's in the Nile, but amid the swirling eddies of the Tugāla ; there is,

however, no lack of interest in the portion which was happily preserved.

Where is Gardiner's monument? Charles Darwin, an impartial witness, recognised it in the transformed character of the Fuégian natives, and in token thereof sent a subscription to the Society which, after the death of the pioneer, continued his good work. But possibly some day, when we find room on our pedestals for more uncrowned kings and swordless heroes, the statue of Captain Allen Gardiner, sailor and saint, may be an object-lesson of grace to our children. Still, not in stone, but in a noble sentiment, his truest memorial will ever be in the hearts of all who can recognise and revere a man of God.

The life of such a man never really ends. For a moment, on that bare Fuégian strand, the icy finger of Death stayed the living current; but with undiminished force it sprang on again, to animate and inspire thousands of other lives in the years to come.

The riddle of the destiny of mankind is not to be solved by the golden calculations of

the financier, nor settled by the stately epigrams of the philosopher, nor cut by the sword of the man of arms. All these but deepen its shadows and intensify its hopeless pain, so that at last the wounded heart of humanity cries with infinite pitifulness, "Who will shew us any good?" The answer comes in tones of mercy from the Cross of Calvary, and the lives of men like Gardiner, Moffat, Livingstone, Gordon, and a host of other heroes, attest the sufficiency of Him who was their Rock and Salvation.

The undaunted persistence of Gardiner's labours, refusing to be baffled by incessant difficulties, was due to a supreme sense of the presence of his God and that passionate yearning for the souls of men which glowed in his heart. He felt that he was making footprints which other workers might find and follow. "Grant, O Lord," was his fervent prayer, "that we may be instrumental in commencing this great and blessed work; but shouldest Thou see fit in Thy providence to hedge up our way, and that we should even languish and die here, I