

THE LIFE OF JOHN READ

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The life of John Read by Blanche J. Read

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BLANCHE J. READ

**THE LIFE
OF JOHN READ**



Yours affecly
J. Read

THE LIFE
OF
JOHN READ.

BY BLANCHIE J. READ.

"I am ready for Earth or Heaven."



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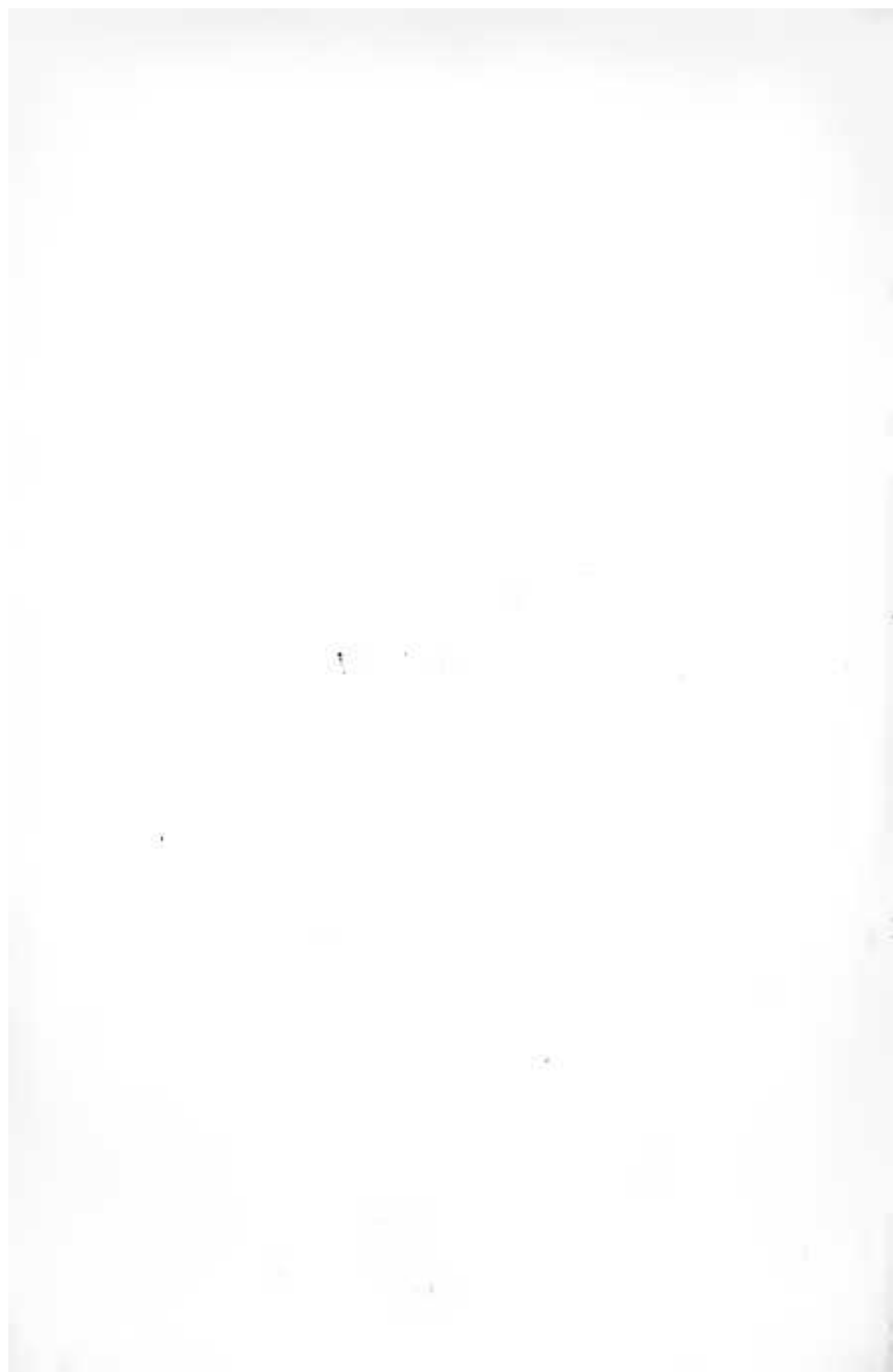
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PREFACE.

My story is told—simply, and I fear imperfectly—but if this perpetuation of my now sainted husband's memory proves a stimulus to his comrades in the holy warfare, and an incentive to more devoted service, and inspires other readers to more fully consecrate their lives to the Lord, I shall feel that the two purposes which actuated me in attempting to write his biography have been realized.

"Biography," Horace Mann says, "especially of the good, who have risen to positions of usefulness, is an ennobling study. Its direct tendency is to reproduce the excellencies it records."

My pen has traced no sentence that is intended to convey the impression that John Read reached the acme of perfection. His was a very human life filled with smiles and tears, joys and sorrows, victories and defeats, successes and disappointments. He was not always understood, but he was beloved by a multitude in all ranks. He was naturally very impulsive, and through this trait doubtless sometimes made mistakes, which no one regretted more than himself; but he loved God, and was devoted to the highest interests of humanity. He was fully alive to the privileges of his high calling in Christ Jesus. He had an ideal character to which he ever strove to attain. The standard of right was the rule of his life, and with unswerving fidelity to principle, he fearlessly did his duty to his God and his fellow-men. His life is one more evidence of what determination and ambition consecrated to a noble purpose can accomplish.

In the early days of his Christian experience he shrank from approaching people personally upon questions relating to their spiritual welfare. Perhaps because his kind heart did not care to wound or inflict pain. But I have heard him speak in terms of deepest gratitude of the Army leader who faithfully counselled him upon this subject, and concluded his remarks with the forceful and expressive truth, "Always remember charity and rebuke go hand-in-hand." How thoroughly he learned this those who knew him can testify, for he lovingly and faithfully dealt with all whom he met, and fearlessly upheld the Cross anywhere and everywhere.

None of the hundreds of sympathetic letters that have come to me since he went Home have brought more comfort on their white wings than those which have gratefully acknowledged his faithfulness in this direction. He was retiring in his disposition, but he so succeeded in mastering his diffidence, that for years I have never known him shrink from any duty however distasteful or irksome. "He was indomitable, invincible," said a clergyman, lately, in speaking of his earnest life.

Naturally I shrank from drawing aside the veil from our home life. I have asked my own heart many times, "Why should I give to the public of the sacred treasures that are exclusively ours?" I voiced this query to a friend the other day, and the answer satisfied me: "You both gave yourself to God and the War, and the giving of this is nothing more." I feel in doing so also I but speak of lives typical of thousands among the Army's officers to-day. A larger volume than the present one might be written from his diaries, but I have merely copied brief extracts from these carefully preserved accounts of fifteen years, chiefly those which refer to the War, our home life, and his soul-experience. I would fain have erased all personal references in transcribing these records, but