

**THE LIFE OF FAITH IN THE SON OF
GOD ILLUSTRATED IN THE MEMOIRS
OF MR. JAMES FIELD, OF CORK,
FORMERLY SERGEANT IN THE ROYAL
BRITISH REGIMENT OF ARTILLERY**

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Formerly Sergeant in the Royal British Regiment of Artillery by James Field & Robert Huston

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JAMES FIELD & ROBERT HUSTON

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OF

MR. JAMES FIELD,

OF CORK,

FORMERLY SERGEANT IN THE ROYAL BRITISH
REGIMENT OF ARTILLERY.

BY ROBERT HUSTON.

I ~~am~~ crucified with Christ : nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ
liveth in me : and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by
the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for
me.—ST. PAUL.

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PREFACE.

HAVING become acquainted with Mr. Field when stationed in Youghal, in the year 1842, and having had frequent opportunities of renewing and strengthening that acquaintance when in Queenstown, and on the general Mission through the south of Ireland, I formed an exalted estimate of his piety, zeal, perseverance, simplicity, integrity of purpose, and usefulness. In one of our interviews he expressed a desire that I would look over his papers, and give him my opinion as to whether they contained any materials that, by publication after his death, might, with the divine blessing, serve the interests of the church and the world. On my consenting to do so, he forwarded them to me at the Conference held in Dublin, June, 1848.

The result of the perusal was a judgment favourable to publication, which, when communicated to him, drew forth the following reply:—
“I am surprised you have pronounced *life* to my journal. I was almost sure it would have been *death*. I have committed the papers to you: do just as you please with respect to the selection and publication. I do not think any selector or author ever undertook a more difficult work;

and nothing but the fear of omitting a duty to my precious Lord, and a service to my generation, would have induced me to expose my ignorance by giving them up. Your opinion concerning them reconciles me; and may God, by His Holy Spirit, assist you in the task!"

The Christian public will now judge whether the memorials of mercy towards him, both in providence and grace, as contained in the following pages, should have been allowed to perish.

The undertaking thus devolved on me was entered upon with unfeigned diffidence and fear, lest the execution might fail,—I will not say, to do justice to Mr. Field's reputation,—but, correctly to exhibit, and worthily to magnify, the grace of God in him.

A studied plainness will be manifest in the style employed, not merely because it was more accordant with the writer's taste than an ornate one, but because it comported more with Mr. Field's character, aims, objects, and mode of speech. Those who knew him will recollect, that while he ever discovered a deep reverence when speaking of divine things, there was in his observations, whether by tongue or pen, a soldier-like point, brevity, and directness, which indicated that his one, eager, supreme desire was effectively and usefully to do his Master's will. Yes, his simple idea, his sublime object, was to have sinners just now pardoned; and pardoned sinners entirely sanctified and "stablished with

abiding grace :” and were this the unceasing aim and effort of all Irish Wesleyans, there could be no room to doubt that Methodism would still live, flourish, and bear fruit increasingly to the honour of God in this country, despite the ignorance or malignancy of its foes, the treachery of its false friends, or the annual diminution of its members by emigration and death.

He was not careful if made the subject of free, and even severe, criticism, as to the manner by which he sought to accomplish such purposes, when the object itself at which he aimed was achieved. Enough for him that his Master’s approving smile was at once his defence and consolation.

In giving quotations from his MSS., his own language is faithfully transcribed ; and no liberty is taken farther than to make those grammatical corrections, and those verbal and other alterations and additions, considered necessary for publication ; while the meaning, in every instance, is preserved in its integrity.

It will be seen, that throughout these Memoirs I have been rather sparing of editorial exposition and amplification, being desirous that my readers *themselves* should ponder the sentiments and facts, and make their own comments ; in which case the perusal cannot fail to profit.

My grateful acknowledgments are hereby respectfully tendered to Henry Cornwall, Esq., and the Misses Hunter, Popham, and Aldworth, of

Bandon; the Rev. F. P. Le Maitre, Mrs. Le Maitre, Mrs. Perrott, and Miss Field, of Cork; the Rev. Joseph W. M'Kay, and Mrs. M'Kay, of Coleraine; the Rev. William Reilly, of Dublin; and Mr. M'Donald, of London; for letters of Mr. Field, or other contributions, kindly furnished by them.

It is not insinuated by the exhibition only of his excellencies, that Mr. Field—although an eminent saint of the Most High—was exempt from those infirmities inseparable from humanity in its best state. He may have been, for example, sometimes too credulous concerning the unproved statements of persons professing to have received distinct blessings from God; but even this failing leaned to virtue's side: it discovered an exuberance of the charity which thinketh no evil. How much preferable such disposition, to the universal suspicion and scepticism of those who, instead of believing and hoping "all things," (1 Cor. xiii. 7,) are ever tardy to believe or hope anything good of any one! Withal, Mr. Field's example was bright, and, in many greatly important respects, worthy of close imitation by the universal church of Christ.

B. H.

ENNISKILLEN,
May 22d, 1850.

MEMOIRS
OF
MR. JAMES FIELD.

CHAPTER I.

I COULD name you many, who, of late, have received such strange preservations, even against the common course of nature, that might convince an atheist of the finger of God therein.—RICHARD BAXTER.

MR. JAMES FIELD was born near Ballybay, in the county of Monaghan, Ireland, March 1st, 1768. His parents were poor and illiterate; and, consequently, without means, if they were even anxious, to afford him the school-learning which he so earnestly desired, and for which he discovered no ordinary degree of aptitude. The account he gives of his early struggles to obtain knowledge, is not less affecting than instructive:—"As none in the family could tell me a word, the difficulties I had to encounter in learning to read were great. Unknown to me, however, the Lord secretly encouraged me to steady perseverance, and I acquired the ability. I read all I could lay my hands on. The Minister of our parish observed me, and said, 'James, I will lend you books, but you must be very punctual in returning them every fortnight.' I was greatly rejoiced,