

**CHARLES FRANCIS
BARNARD: A
SKETCH OF HIS LIFE
AND WORK, PP. 1-201**

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Charles Francis Barnard: A Sketch of His Life and Work, pp. 1-201 by Francis Tiffany

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FRANCIS TIFFANY

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Chas. F. Barnard.

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A SKETCH OF

HIS LIFE AND WORK

BY

FRANCIS TIFFANY



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTORY	I
II. OLD BOSTON	5
III. JOSEPH TUCKERMAN	11
IV. BIRTH AND SCHOOL LIFE	23
V. AT HARVARD COLLEGE	33
VI. IN THE DIVINITY SCHOOL	39
VII. ORDINATION	46
VIII. BRIEF MARRIED LIFE	51
IX. THE CHILDREN'S CHURCH	55
X. PLEA FOR A NEW BUILDING	68
XI. WARREN STREET CHAPEL	78
XII. NEW WAYS WITH CHILDREN	93
XIII. SETTING OBJECT LESSONS	107
XIV. "THE DANCING PARSON"	123
XV. THOMAS STARR KING AND ROBERT C. WINTHROP	135
XVI. THE FLORAL PROCESSIONS	150
XVII. OLD CHAPEL BOYS	166
XVIII. THE INEVITABLE DAY	176
XIX. AN OUTING IN THE SOUTH	185
XX. CONCLUSION.	196

CHARLES FRANCIS BARNARD.

I.

INTRODUCTORY.

WHETHER the story of any enterprise in religious philanthropy is worth the telling hinges mainly on a single point: Was the enterprise a simple repetition of what had been done a hundred times before, or was it fruitfully original in character? Were its inspiring ideas seminal?

When, for example, Charles L. Brace founded in New York his Newsboys' Home, he planted an organic seed, and that in as literal a sense as the wheat or maize the farmer sows in his field. To start one more Sunday-school, in which to try to make on the little waifs of the street a few fleeting impressions, as speedily to vanish as the dew under the glare of the sun, was no object of his. What he aimed

at was to substitute in the place of an environment of outcast neglect, thriftlessness, gambling, and profligacy, an environment of friendliness, decency, stimulus to economy and ambition, along with religious suggestions of the ideal of a higher life. Steadily the germ hidden in the project of the home in the heart of the city for homeless children expanded into that of ten thousand genuine homes in farmers' families all over the country. From city to city the idea spread till thousands, who otherwise would have perished morally in an atmosphere of infection, were put under permanent conditions of health and purity.

Equally did this hold true of the foundation in 1834 of Warren Street Chapel in Boston. In aim and method it was the conception of a distinctly original mind. It constituted an epoch in the philanthropic history of the city. It enlisted in its service the enthusiastic and persistent devotion of men and women of the most varied kinds of ability. It went out into the highways and hedges to compel in the outcast, not to a feast of dry husks, but

to a festival of love, joy, and light, such as Christ pictures in the scene where the wedding garment of beauty is thrown over every guest. Furthermore, it became the prompter of numberless like enterprises in other fields. And it owed alike its conception and the spirit of consecrated enthusiasm with which it was sustained to the fertile brain, the glowing heart, and the rare power of enkindling others, of a single man, Charles F. Barnard. For these reasons is the story of the institution and of its founder worth the telling.

In this world, however, nothing starts up a purely isolated phenomenon. Every institution has its roots in the past, while drawing its nutriment for growth out of the soil of the present. Human originality is no power of creating something out of nothing. It consists in capacity to be the first to see what is already waiting to be seen by him who has eyes. Without, then, clearly reading and interpreting the signs of the times immediately antecedent to any new movement, it is impossible to take in its significance, or justly to estimate how far in reality it was a distinct contri-