

# **CHURCH STORIES**

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Church Stories by J. Erskine Clarke

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**J. ERSKINE CLARKE**

**CHURCH  
STORIES**



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# CHURCH STORIES.

SELECTED AND REVISED

BY

J. ERSKINE CLARKE, M.A.

VICAR OF ST. MICHAEL'S, DERBY, AUTHOR OF "CHILDREN AT CHURCH," AND EDITOR  
OF "THE PARISH MAGAZINE" AND "MONTHLY MEDLEY FOR HAPPY HOMES."



LONDON:

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1862.

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## PREFACE.

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IN my capacity of Editor of the *Parish Magazine*, the MSS. of many stories are sent to me for perusal. Some of these, though, from their length or other cause, they are not suited for the *Parish Magazine*, yet seem likely to attract, interest, and benefit a certain class of readers.

I have therefore ventured the publication of this group of such little tales, which I have called "Church Stories," because the scenes in which their incidents are laid, and the nature of the teaching which the narratives are meant to convey, are specially familiar to Church-folk.

The scope of these Stories, however, is by no means controversial: they are simply intended to supply a meal of light and wholesome food for that appetite for books which the Church, by her schools, does more to create in her children than to cater for in their after years.

It is vain to say that people must not read fiction, for, when cottage-homes are so amply supplied with those 'penny numbers,' each of which contains a portion of some high-spiced romance, we must be content with

endeavouring to withdraw cottage readers from what is injurious in fiction to what is harmless, by offering them stories which shall be attractive in character and yet healthy in tone.

My own share in this compilation is very slight: I have merely selected the Stories which I thought suitable. I have revised some of the didactic portions which were liable to misconception; and (if I may coin a word) I have *Saxonized* and simplified the language where it seemed desirable to do so.

If the demand for this volume prove that it has been found useful for parish or school libraries, or for book-hawking purposes, it is proposed to issue similar groups of "Church Stories" from time to time, in a uniform shape.

J. ERSKINE CLARKE.

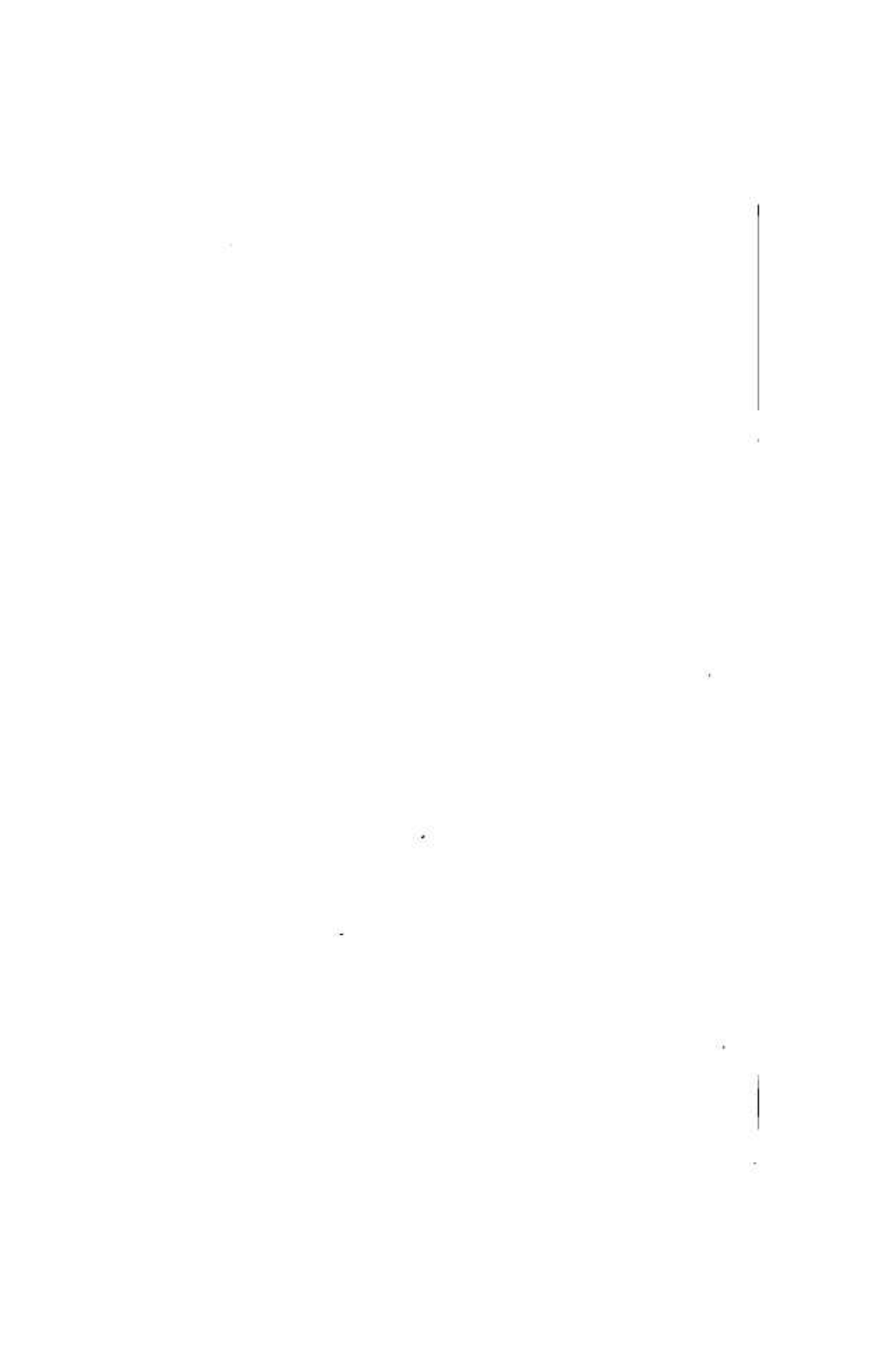
*St. Michael's Vicarage, Derby,  
April, 1862.*



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# WINNIE BARTON;

OR,

## THE PASTOR OUR FRIEND.

FROM THE DIARY OF A PARISH MINISTER.

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**I** MAKE no apology in drawing upon my diary for the following narrative, the circumstances of which will ever remain strongly impressed upon my memory, and may interest, if not benefit, my readers.

My rectorial duties began as the incumbent of a living producing a small income, but large in the amount of labour, in the oldest part of the ancient city of Norwich.

I was a stranger to the place, unknown by, and knowing none of its inhabitants, but with the intention and desire to fulfil my high and important duties with all the attention, energy, hope, and conscientiousness which a vigorous constitution and a sincere love for my sacred calling, with a deep feeling of its responsibility, could give. In short, I was young, healthy, and ardent, and planned for myself a career of successful labour. My parishioners were chiefly poor, and to the poor I resolved to devote myself, feeling that, as they are especially the care of the Almighty, they are therefore the particular charge of His minister.

Having determined to make myself known among my flock by calls from house to house, I began these daily walks as soon as I had established myself in comfortable but inexpensive lodgings, taking as my guide the Clerk of the Parish.

John Carter, an industrious, well-meaning man, talked of "his position in the Church" with much consequence,