

**THOMAS SHILLITOE,
SHOEMAKER
AND MINISTER**

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Thomas Shillitoe, Shoemaker and Minister by Frances Anne Budge

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**THOMAS SHILLITOE,
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AND MINISTER**

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Sboemaker and Minister.

BY

FRANCES ANNE BUDGE,

AUTHOR OF "ANNALS OF THE EARLY FRIENDS," "THE BARCLAYS OF URY,"
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STEPHEN GRELLET," "THOMAS ELLWOOD, AND OTHER
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CHAPTER I.

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"You would have me refuse tears to men for whom Christ shed His blood! To whom would you have me show 'pity if not to sinners?"

—ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

CHAPTER I.

"As far as I have heard and read, the really great things in the world have not been done by great companies nor great men, but by one man here, and another woman there, whom the Lord chose because He could trust them."

Mrs. SEWELL.

A HUNDRED years ago, on a winter's day, if we could have looked into the workshop of a certain shoemaker at Tottenham, we might have seen, in the Quaker garb of the day, a man in early middle life, small of stature and most timid in temperament, employed in cutting out leather for his men. Why does his face wear an anxious, troubled look? A minister of the Gospel, he had for some time been greatly perplexed by the belief that the Lord was calling him to religious service in another part of England, the accomplishment of which would occupy considerable time, whilst the obstacles in the way of leaving home seemed insurmountable. It was, as he says, "a fresh trial of faith in the all-sufficiency of the power of Him who, when He calls forth, can qualify not only for the work, but amply care also

for the stuff left behind and those left in charge of it."

His wife did not understand the business, and as she kept no servant was much engaged with her children. The only person to be left in charge was an assistant of unsteady conduct, who had shown symptoms of mental derangement; and depredations of thieves had been frequent in the neighbourhood. Truly, it must have been a trial of faith when that day the inward summons to the distant service was renewed. . . . Yet, presently that troubled expression changed for one of confidence and peace, and the knife with which he was cutting the leather fell from his hand. He says that as he yielded up his will to do God's bidding, the promise spoken to his heart was as plain as if spoken to his ear:—

"I will be more than bolts and bars to thy outward habitation; more than a master to thy servants, for I can restrain their wandering minds; more than a husband to thy wife, and a parent to thy infant children."

This shoemaker was Thomas Shillitoe, who was born at Holborn, London, in 1754. He was only twelve years old when his father took the "Three Tuns" public-house at Islington, and thus the lad's life became a greatly exposed one. Still worse were his surroundings when he was apprenticed to a