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life of  
**GEORGE MUELLER**

Father to the fatherless



Looked after 10,024 orphans in his life time  
Founded the Ashley Down Orphan House in Bristol, England  
Supported 115 missionaries and employed 112 assistants  
Opened 7 Day schools in which 81,501 children passed out  
Opened 12 Sunday schools which benefitted 32,944 children  
Distributed 1,989,266 copies of the Bible and parts  
Circulated 3,101,338 tracts

J.D. William

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## PREFACE

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J.D. William



*"It is a wonderful thing that such a worthless, faithless servant as I am, should have power with God. Take courage from this for yourselves, brethren. Surely, if such a one as I am, so little conformed to the mind of Jesus, has his prayers answered, may not you also, at last have your requests granted to you."*

*George Muller*

### **GENESIS BOOKS**

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*Life of*  
**GEORGE MUELLER**  
*Father to the fatherless*

George Mueller was born at Kroppenstaedt, near Halberstadt, Persia, on Sept 27, 1805. His parents then moved to Heimersleben, where his father worked as a collector of excise. George Mueller had no proper parental training. He and his brother were freely given money hoping that they may learn to use it and save it. But the result was careless wastage. The worse thing was when asked to give an account of the money, sins of lying and deception were used to hide wasteful spending.

His father had plans that George should become a clergyman so that in future he might have a good living and a comfortable parsonage in which he could spend his old age. When his father moved to Schoenebeck in 1831, he sent his two boys to Cathedral school at Magdalburg. George hoped that change of place could help him break from sinful snares and evil companions. He made the common and fatal mistake of overlooking the source of betterment. "God was not in all his thoughts."

At 16, he lusted after a young Catholic girl. He took one step after another in the path of wicked indulgence. First of all, by lying to his tutor he got consent for going, and then came a week of sinning at Magdalburg and wasting of his father's money at a costly hotel. His father discovered his absence and brought him back. He again took all the money that he could find and went to Brunswick where his money was all gone in a week. He then went, without money, to another hotel and started living as if he had plenty of money. After a week the owner suspected that he had no money and took his best clothes as security.

He then walked six miles to an inn and there too started living as if he had plenty of money. On the third morning he went quietly out of the yard and ran off. This time he was caught and sent to jail. This boy of sixteen was already a liar, thief, swindler and a drunkard. He became an inmate of a prison dwelling with thieves and murderers. And so passed away twenty four dark days from Dec 18, 1821 to Jan 12. His father learned of his disgrace and sent money to meet his hotel dues and other 'costs' and pay for his return home.

Through lying and persuading, he convinced his father to put him at a school in Nordhaaunce. He lived in the house of the Principal and grew highly in his favor. He was held by the Principal as an example for the rest of the class.

Here George was also accepted as a candidate for the holy orders, with permission to preach in the Lutheran establishment. This student of divinity knew nothing of God or salvation, and was even ignorant of the gospel plan of salvation.

Here too, his money was soon spent and he borrowed till there was no one to lend, and he pawned his watch and clothes. He could not be more wretched, for it was plain to what a goal of poverty, misery and dishonor such paths lead. Desperately he tried to abandon his evil doings. He tried to be better and made many resolutions which soon came to be nothing. To steady his course, he choose for himself a friend, a former classmate named Beta, whose quiet seriousness he thought might help. But he was leaning on a broken reed, for Beta was himself a backslider.

The sin and the misery of these twenty years have been reluctantly written to make clear that his conversion was a supernatural thing, a work of God. There was nothing in himself to 'evolve' such a result, nor was there anything in the 'environment.' Surely such a man could undergo no radical change of character and life without the intervention of some mighty power from above! After twenty years of sin, which brought bitterness and worthlessness, a radical change in the character happened which proves and displays the sovereignty of the Almighty Grace.

One Saturday afternoon about the middle of November, 1825, Beta said to George that he was going to a meeting at a believer's house. Here few friends gathered to sing, to pray and to read the Word of God. Such a meeting held nothing for a man whose pleasures were of different sort. Yet, George felt at once a desire to go to this meeting though he could not tell why. The world and its pleasure can never satisfy a human soul and the more one tries to enjoy it, the more conscious void one feels. Some instinctive inner voice whispered that he might find food for his soul's hunger, a satisfying which he had groped for.

Beta had backslided and joined and aided George Mueller in all his evil courses. On coming back the sense of sin constrained him to make a full confession to his father and he became friend to Mr. Wagner at whose dwellings the meetings were held. The two men therefore went together and the former backslider was used of God to convert a sinner from the error of his way and save a soul from death and sins.

That Saturday meeting was a turning point in George Mueller's life. He found himself in strange company and novel surroundings. George felt so awkward that he actually apologized for being there. But he never forgot Brother Wagner's gracious reply, 'Come as often as you please! house and heart is open for you.' They sang a hymn. Then a brother, who afterwards went to Africa, fell on his knees and prayed for God's blessing on the meeting. That kneeling before God in prayer made upon Mueller an everlasting impression. He was in his twenty first year and he had never seen any one on his knees praying. A chapter was read from the Word of God, and a printed sermon was read. After another hymn the master of the hymn prayed. George Mueller was saying inwardly, "I am more learned than this illiterate person but I cannot pray as he." He remarked later to Beta, "All we saw on our trip to Switzerland, and all our former pleasures are as nothing compared to this evening."

He felt a new and strange peace and rest as he lay in the bed that night. He knew little of the Great Healer, but somehow he had touched the hem of His garment. He had now tasted that God is gracious. But he himself could not understand the relish for the divine things. Before the following Saturday he had met Brother Wagner three times to search the scriptures. He started living a changed life. Not that

all habits were abandoned all at once, for each new transformation demands deeper knowledge of the word and the will of God than George Mueller yet had. But within him there was a deep and sanctifying work at work. There was distaste for wicked joys and former companions. He stopped going to taverns. Pleasure trips were abandoned. His lying tongue which he employed for all evil had a new guard set at the door of his lips. Though yet weak and often defeated in his new life before temptations, he did not habitually "continue in sin" nor offend God without godly sorrow. He read the word of God, prayed often, loved fellow disciples, and sought church assemblies.

George Mueller's next marked step was the discovery of the preciousness of the word of God. And, of them all, that "little Gospel" in John 3:16. This is where he found full salvation.

**FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD,  
THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT  
WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT  
PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE.**

From these words he got the first glimpse of the philosophy of the plan of salvation- Why and how the Lord Jesus bore our sins in his body on the cross, how his sufferings on the cross made it needless that a penitent believing sinner should bear his own iniquity and die for it. He found in the Word of God the love of God. Thus early in life he learned that in the Blood of Christ is both forgiveness and cleansing. Whether we seek pardon for sin or the power over sin, the sole source and the secret are in Christ's work for us.

The new year 1826 was indeed a new year to this newborn soul. He began to read missionary journals which kindled a new flame in his heart. He wrote to his father and brother of his own happy experience, begging them to seek and find a like rest in God. He sought his father's permission to join with some missionary society in Germany. But the reply was an angry response. His father reminded him of all the money he had spent on his education so that he would repay him by ensuring a safe 'living' in old age. From that day onwards he decided to support himself at the university. He started depending upon God for his daily needs. He got a well paid job of teaching German to some American professors, and translating their lectures. For the first time in his life he had money to spare. "Thus" he says, "the Lord richly made up to me the little I relinquished for His sake."

He began to work for the Lord by speaking to other's about their soul's welfare, writing to former companions about their sin, circulating tracts and missionary papers. once for two months he lived in the free lodging for the poor divinity students in the famous Orphan houses by A.H.Francke, a professor of divinity at Halle. The professor had been led to found orphanages in entire dependence upon God. The whole building was unforgettable proof that the living God hears the prayer, and can, in answer to our prayer alone, build a house for orphan children. He often told as to how his own faith work was indebted to the example of simple trust in prayer exhibited by Mr. Francke. Seven years later he read his life, and was thereby still encouraged to follow his example as he followed Christ. One lesson yet to be learned was that the fountain of all wisdom and strength is the Holy

Scriptures. For the first four years of his new life he gave himself to the works of men rather to that of God. In Nov, 1825 he met a praying band of disciples and from them he understood the great value of the scriptures. God Himself condescended to become an author, inspiring Holy men to write the scriptures. As he read and studied the book of God, he felt himself more and more acquainted with the author. As soon as George Mueller found this well-spring of delight and success, he drank habitually at this fountain of living waters. In later life he lamented that, owing to his neglect of God's word he remained so long in Spiritual infancy, with its ignorance and impotence. During the last twenty years of his life he read it carefully through, four or five times annually, with a rapid increase in the knowledge of a God. His close walk with God began at a point when he learned that such walk is always in the light of inspired word.

Passion for souls is a divine fire, and in the heart of George Mueller that fire now began to burn more brightly. He first wished to go to Bucharrest for mission work, but God had other plans for his servant. Once Mr. Hermann Ball, a missionary among the Polish Jews was at a weekly meeting in Mueller's room. He told as to how his failing health forbade his continuing his work among the Jews. George Mueller at once felt a strong desire to work among God's chosen but erring people. At this time, Dr. Tholuck, an agent of the London Missionary Society asked Mueller if he would work among the Jews. The committee in London hearing that a missionary was available proposed his coming to London as a missionary student to prepare for his work. There was however an obstacle. Pursian male subjects must commonly serve three years in the army, and classical students who have passed the university examinations, at least one year. George Mueller who had not even served this shorter term could not, without royal exemption, get a passport out of the country. About this time Mueller fell very sick. He was then asked to go to Berlin to teach German and he went hoping at the Prussian capital to find access to the court through persons of rank. But here again he failed. There now seemed no way of escaping soldier's term, and he submitted himself for examination, but was pronounced physically unfit for military duties. Being examined for the second time he was again found unfit and henceforth completely exempted for life from all service in the army. Thus God had set His servant free from the service of his country that he might serve as a good soldier, the captain of salvation - Lord Jesus Christ. In Feb, 1829, he left for London.

As a student in the new seminary, he studied for twelve hours daily. He memorized much of the Old Testament in Hebrews in a prayerful spirit. He was however sensible of the risk of that deadness of soul which often results from undue absorption in mental studies. In London he heard about a missionary in Persia who had given up his big job to do God's work, and who was simply trusting God for all his temporal supplies. This act of self-denying trust had a strange charm for Mr. Mueller, and he could not take it from his mind. It was a lesson of faith for him in the line of trust of which he was a conspicuous example for more than sixty years.

At this time Mueller fell sick. For a change of air he moved to Teignmouth. It was here that he met Henry Craik, soon to become his close friend and afterwards his fellow-worker. While at Teignmouth convalescing that he learnt to meditate on the scriptures, and to rely on them as he had never done. By this time he returned to

London. He now began to gather with some of his fellow-students from six till eight each morning for prayer and Bible reading. So sweet did he find communion with God now that after the communal prayers in the evening he used to go to his room and pray till midnight. Then, so full of joy that he could not keep it to himself, he would go to the room of another student and finding him in a similar state, pray with him until 1 a.m. or even 2 a.m. This would not prevent him from being up again to join others in prayer at 6 a.m.

Mueller then felt a strong conviction that instead of spending his little energy in studies he should at once get to work. He wrote to the society for a prompt appointment to a field. After waiting in vain for six weeks without an answer, he felt a strong conviction to take action. He started working among the Jews in London. He met them in their gathering places, read the scriptures with some fifty Jewish boys, distributed tracts, and taught them in the Sunday school. In 1829, he wrote to the society that they should agree to allow him to work without a salary, working when and where the Lord requires him to do. The Society wrote back that they cannot employ those who are unwilling to submit to their guidance with respect to missionary operations. Thus, the link with the Society was broken. He never repented afterward of this decision nor changed his judgment. When we look at his life, it is quite apparent that God was gently but persistently thrusting George Mueller out of the common path into one where he was to walk closely with Himself. By the end of 1829, he was but a young man of twenty-five, yet already he had been taught some of the grand secrets of a holy, happy, and a useful life.

In 1830, he was asked to take the place of a minister at Teignmouth, and then later he moved to Sidmouth. Here he had a strong conviction that he should not, as a minister of God receive a fixed salary. He felt that a fixed salary cannot be paid without a fixed income through pew-rentals or from other sources. Since the poor brethren cannot afford as good setting as the rich, distinctions are created. A pew rental may at times be a burden to a willing disciple. The minister would also be free to give his message with freedom if he does not depend on the congregation for his living.

With these convictions he announced that he would take no fixed salary for any service rendered to God's people. However he said that voluntary offering could be given, whether money or other means of support. He had put up a box in the chapel for voluntary offerings. He further felt that he should ask no help from men for travel and any other needs, thus trusting in God rather than in the arm of flesh.

On Oct. 7, 1830, George Mueller, in finding a wife, found a good thing and obtained a new favor from God. Miss Mary Groves, sister of the self-denying dentist whose surrender of all things for the mission work had so impressed him years before, was married to this man of God and for forty years proved to be a help meet for him. She was a rare woman and the heart of her husband safely trusted in her and the great family of orphans who were to



Mary Groves

her as children called her blessed. One of the earliest ties which bound these two in one was the bond of common self denial. Yielding literal obedience to Luke 12:3, "Sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor. Make yourselves wallets that don't wear out, a dependable treasure in heaven, where no thief can get close and no moth can destroy anything." They sold what little they had and gave alms. The step then taken was voluntary poverty. From then on the newly married husband and wife looked only to God. From then on they were put to ample tests, testing their faith in the great Provider and the faithfulness of the great Promiser.

A crisis like wife's sickness created a demand for extra expense, for which no provision was made, not because of carelessness but upon a principle. Mr. Mueller held that to save money was against the full trust in God. Experience in an emergency justified his faith. Even in the matter of his wife's sickness all unforeseen wants were met but even the delicacies and refreshment needful for the sick and weak was graciously supplied. The two medical attendants also declined all remuneration for services which extended for six weeks.

Once their money was reduced to almost nothing. Their bread was hardly enough for that day. He had several times brought their need before the Lord. After dinner, he thanked God and asked for the daily bread. While he was praying, there was a knock at the door of the room. A poor sister came in, and brought them some of her dinner, and from another poor sister, 5s. In the afternoon she also brought them a large loaf. Thus the Lord not only gave bread, but also money.

Once they were reduced to just eight shillings. That afternoon when they were with a sister, she asked if they needed money. Mr. Mueller said that it is one of their principles not to tell anyone of their needs. She replied, "but God has told me to give you some money. About a fortnight ago I had asked God what I should do for Him, and He had said to give you some money. Last Saturday it came again so powerfully to my mind and has not left me since then." The sister gave them two guineas.

These and many more experiences confirmed that a life of faith forbids laying up of treasures against unforeseen needs for with God no emergency is unforeseen and no want unprovided for.

Another principle was never to contract debt, whether for personal purposes or for Lord's work. This matter was settled in scriptural grounds once for all. "Do not owe anyone anything—except to love one another." He and his wife determined that they would rather suffer starvation rather than buy anything without having to pay for it.

In March, 1832, his friend Mr. Henry Craik left Shaldon for four weeks to labor in Bristol. On April 13, a letter from Mr. Craik, inviting Mueller to join his work at Bristol made such an impression on his mind that he began prayerfully to consider if it was God's call. On April 20, Mr. Mueller left for Bristol. On April 22, 1832, George Mueller first stood in the Pulpit of Gideon Chapel. This was the beginning of his new usefulness. From now on for exactly sixty-six years Bristol was to be inseparable. In the afternoon of the first Sabbath he preached at Pithay Chapel and the sermon was conspicuously owned of the Lord. Among other converted by it was a young man, a notorious drunkard. And, before the sun had set, Mr. Mueller was



fully persuaded that the Lord had brought him to Bristol with a purpose. He felt that two are better than one, and that each might possibly fill up some lack in the other. Thus, both of them proved to be of much benefit to sinners and saints.

On May 23, Mueller left Teignmouth for Bristol, to be followed the next day by Mr. Craik. To the believer's at Gideon Chapel they stated their terms that they were to have no fixed relationship to the congregation, preaching in such manner and for such season as should seem to them according to God's will, that they should be under no bondage to any rules among them, that pew-rents should be done away with, and that they would look to the Lord for all their temporal needs. Within a month Bethesda Chapel was also rented for a year. Services began there too.



Bethesda Chapel

On Sept 17, 1832 a daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Mueller. She became one of God's purest saints and the beloved wife of James Wright.

In Feb 1832, he began to read the biography of A. H. Francke, the founder of Orphan houses of Halle. A. H. Francke was a German. About 1696, at Halle in Prussia, he had commenced the largest enterprise for the poor children then existing in the world. He trusted in God, and He whom he trusted did not fail him, but helped him abundantly. The institutions, which resembled rather a large street than a building, were erected, and in them about two thousand orphans were housed, fed, clad, and taught. For about thirty years all went on under Francke's own eyes, until 1727, when he died. After his departure his like-minded son-in-law became the director and continued the noble work.

Meditation on Francke's life and work naturally led this man who was hungering for a wider usefulness to think more of the poor homeless children. He thought of planning something under God to provide for them. In 1833, when he was not yet twenty-eight, he took a step in this direction. He decided to gather poor children out of the street at about eight o'clock, every day, and give them some breakfast and for an hour and half teach them to read or read to them the Holy Scriptures, and later on to do a like service for the adult and old poor. He began at once to feed thirty or forty people, confident that as the numbers increased, the Lords provision would also increase. He was guided to a place which could hold hundred and fifty children and which could be rented. Unexpected obstacles however prevented from carrying out these plans. The neighbors were annoyed at the crowd of idlers congregating. Thus this method was dropped but the central theme and aim were never lost.

From time to time a backward glance over the Lord's doing encouraged his heart. He records that during the four years that he began to trust in God for supplies he had suffered no want. In the first year he received one hundred and thirty pounds,

in the second one hundred and fifty one, in the third one hundred and ninety five, and in the fourth two hundred and sixty seven, all in free will offerings and without ever asking any human for a penny. He looked to God alone and his supplies increased every year, from strange channels, from remote distances, from parties he had never seen. The supply always corresponded to his need whether great or less.

On Feb 20, 1834, George Mueller was led by God to sow the seed of what ultimately developed into "The Scriptural Institution." They did not want to join with existing societies because they believed that all work of God should be carried on in exact accordance with God's will in order to have its fullest blessing. They felt that these existing societies mixed themselves with the world instead of being separate. Anyone by paying a fixed sum of money could become its member, the unscriptural ways of raising money, seeking patronage from men of the world and asking such to preside at public meetings, habit of contracting debt. Hence they hoped that by working according to biblical principles they might secure blessed results.

On March 5, at a public meeting a formal announcement was made of the intentions to establish an institution and of its purposes and principles. The substance of its principles is as follows.

*1. Every believer's duty and privilege is to help on the cause and work of God.*

*2. The patronage of the world is not to be sought after, depended upon.*

*3. Aid or help to manage or carry its affairs is not to be asked for or sought from those who are not believers.*

*4. Debts are not to be contracted or allowed for any cause in the work of the Lord.*

*5. The standard of success is not to be numerical or financial standard.*

*6. All compromise of truth or any measures that impair the testimony to God are to be avoided.*

The objects of the institution were like wise announced as follows.

*1. To establish or aid day-schools, Sunday schools, and adult schools, taught and conducted only by believers on scriptural principles.*

*2. To circulate the Holy Scriptures, wholly or in portions over the widest possible territory.*

*3. To aid missionary efforts and assist laborers, in the Lord's work anywhere, who are working on Biblical principles and looking towards the Lord for support.*

To project such a work, on such a scale, and at such a time, was doubly an act of faith. Firstly, they had too much already at hand to tax their full time and strength and secondly this record appears in Mr. Mueller's journal: "Ye have only one shilling left." Their eyes were on the full and exhaustless treasure of the rich Lord. It was plainly God's plan that out of such abundance of poverty, the riches of his liberality should be manifested. It pleased Him, from whom, by whom, are all things that the work should begin when His servants are the poorest and weakest, that its growth to a giant proportions might prove it to be a plant of His own right hand's planting, that His word might be fulfilled.

**I the LORD do keep it; I will water it every moment:  
lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. (Isa 27:3)**

On March 19, Mrs. Mueller gave birth to a son, whom they named Elijah after much prayer.

Seven months after the establishment of the institution, there were one hundred and twenty children in Sunday school; forty in adult classes; two hundred and nine children in the four day-school; eighty two Bibles and five hundred and twenty Testaments had been put into circulation, and fifty seven pounds had been spent in the aid of missionary operations. During this time the Lord had sent, in answer to prayer, over one hundred and sixty seven pounds in money, and much blessing upon the work. On June 22, 1835, Mr. Mueller's father-in-law died and both the children were very ill. Four days later little Elijah also died. The grandfather and the grandson were laid in one grave. Henceforth Mr. and Mrs. Mueller were to have no son, and Lydia was to remain their one and only child. About the middle of the following month, Mr. Mueller was quite disabled from the work by weakness of the chest, which needed rest and change. The Lord tenderly provided for his need through those whose heart he had touched, leading them to offer him and his wife hospitalities in the Isle of Wight. Money was also sent for a "change of air." Here while reading John Newton's life he was stirred to write what the Lord was doing for him and which later on came to be known as 'The Narrative of the Lords dealing with George Mueller.'

An orphan boy who had been in the school had been taken to a poorhouse as he was unable to attend due to extreme poverty. This set Mr. Mueller thinking and praying about orphans. Could not something be done to meet the temporal and the spiritual need of the orphans? He had always been moved by the ragged and wretched homeless children running wild in the streets of Bristol.

He started praying about it. He also searched his heart to discover his own motives. Mr. Craik also encouraged him and on Dec 2, 1835, the first formal step was taken in ordering printed bills announcing a public meeting for a week in which the proposal to open an orphan house was to be laid before the brethren.

Three days later, in reading the Psalms, he was struck with these words:

**OPEN THY MOUTH WIDE, AND I WILL FILL IT. Psalms 81:10**

From that time this text formed one of his greatest life-mottos, and this promise became a power in molding all his work. He was led to apply this scripture confidently to this new plan. He at once boldly asked for a premise, for one thousand pounds in money, and for suitable helpers to take charge of the children. Two days later he received the first gift-one shilling-and within two days the first donation in furniture, a large wardrobe. But the first foremost need was of able and suitable helpers, which only God could supply. Mr. Mueller said that they must be men and women who would naturally care for the orphans and their state. If one Achan could disturb the whole camp, one Ananias or Sapphira the whole church, then one self seeking assistant could prove not a helper but a hinderer. No step was hastily taken. He waited patiently on God. On Dec 10, came a letter from a brother and sister who willingly offered themselves, and the spirit that moved them is seen in their letter.

"We propose ourselves for the service of the intended orphan house, if you

think us qualified for it; also to give up all furniture etc; which the Lord has given us, for its use; and to do this without receiving any salary, believing that if it be the will of God to employ us, He will supply all our needs.”

Among the first givers, was a poor needlewoman who brought a surprising sum of one hundred pounds. This self-denial and whole hearted giving made this a peculiarly sacred offering a token of God's favor. He who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, passing by the rich, mighty, and noble of this world, chose a poor, weak, nothing, to be one of the first givers, that no flesh should glory in His presence.

April 1, 1836 was fixed as the opening of a house for female orphans. The building, no. 6, Wilson Street, where Mr. Mueller had himself lived up to March 25, having been rented for one year, was formally opened. The public was informed that needy applicants would be taken in. By April 11, orphans began to be admitted and in a month there were 26 children in the house. The first house had scarcely been opened for girls when the work for starting the second house for orphans was also started. In a year there were thirty children in each house.

Mr. Mueller who had asked for one thousand pounds from God, tells us that, in his mind, the thing was as good as done, and he often gave thanks for the large sum of money as though already in his hand. On June 10, 1837, the whole sum was received, no appeal having been made but only to God daily for eighteen months and ten days.

During this time he increasingly felt that he shouldn't become too busy to pray. He felt that he must retire for more secret communion with God even at the cost of his public work. He used to tell his brethren that one hour of prayer and four hours of work is better than five hours of work without any prayer at all. And so Mr. Mueller used to have long hours of supplication and intercession before God.

Early in 1838, he began to read the biography of George Whitefield. The life story of the orphan's friend-Franck, had given him the primary impulse to his work; the life story of the converted blasphemer-John Newton, had suggested him a narrative on the Lord's dealing. And now the life story of the great evangelist was blessed of God to shape his general character and give new power to his preaching and wider ministry to souls. His unparalleled success could be traced to two causes, his unusual prayerfulness, and his habit of reading the Bible on his knees. He now himself began to read the word of God upon his knees and found for hours great



Play time in Wilson street

blessing in such meditation and prayer over a single psalm or chapter.

In July 1838, Mr. Mueller was confronted with a trial of faith. A year before they were having seven hundred and eighty pounds and now they were reduced to twenty pounds. Mr. Mueller, his wife, Mr. Craik, and one another connected with the boy's Orphan House were only permitted to know the low state of funds. They gave themselves to united prayer. Although the supply ran low seven more children were given notice to enter and then five more were received. The trial hour had come but not gone. Less than two months later the money supply had run so low that it was needful that the Lord should give by the days and almost by the hours if needs were to be met. Many pounds were reduced to one penny in hand. Then one day four pounds came. Mr. Mueller felt why not lay three pounds against the coming need. But immediately he remembered that it was written:

**“SUFFICIENT UNTO THE DAY IS THE EVIL THEREOF”**

Mr. Mueller unhesitatingly cast himself upon God, and paid out the whole amount for salary then due, leaving himself penniless. He knew well that the work of feeding the orphans were not his but Gods. These were His orphans. Did he not declare himself to be the Father of the fatherless?

Mr. Mueller felt the need to increase the praying circle. He now felt that those who labored in the work must also share in prayers. Mr. Mueller thus called the brothers and sisters linked with him in the running of the Orphan House and showed them the distress they were in. He asked them to be in good courage, assuring that help was near at hand. He reiterated the unchanging laws of conduct of the Lord's business. Nothing must be bought for which there was no money to pay and nothing should be revealed to an outsider. The only resort should be God. The helpers were often reminded that the supreme object of the institution was to prove God's fullness and to trust solely on his promises. Thus the devoted and the informed co-workers met the crises intelligently. If, when there were no funds, there must be no leaning on man, no debt incurred, no lack allowed. The only resort was the leaning on the unseen God. The orphans were never told but every need was met. Famine and drought never reached Bristol orphanages. The earnest, importunate prayers were a great blessing and God only knows that how the progress was because of their faith, supplication, and self-denial.

Mr. Mueller was not the only self-denying giver. His co-workers often turned the crises by their own offering, which though small was costly. Out of the deep poverty abounded the riches of liberality. The money they gave was sometimes like the widow's two mites- all their living; and not only the last penny, but ornaments, jewels, heirlooms, long kept, long cherished treasures. They gave all they could so that there was meat in the Lord's house and no lack of bread.

One of the gentleman and some ladies while visiting the Orphan House saw large numbers of orphans. One of the lady remarked, “of course you cannot carry these institutions without a good stock of fund.” The quiet answer was, “our funds are deposited in a bank which cannot break.” The reply drew tears in the eyes of the lady and five pounds from the pocket of the gentleman- a donation at the right time because there was not even a single penny left.

At a time of great financial distress, a letter reached him from a brother.

“Have you any present need for the institution under your care? I know that you don't ask but to answer when asked seems another thing and a right thing. Kindly inform me the amount you need presently.” At this time there remained with him twenty-seven pence. Nevertheless, his reply was, “Whilst I thank you for your love, I don't feel the liberty to speak about the state of funds, as the primary object of the work in my hands is to lead those who are weak in faith to see that there is reality in dealing with God alone.” The Lord moved the loving brother to donate one hundred pounds, which came when there was no penny in hand.

To an offering in March 1839, there is a peculiar history. He had given a copy of the annual report to a believing brother who had been greatly stirred up to prayer after reading it. He knew that his sister who was also a disciple possessed costly ornaments and jewels.

The brother prayed that she may know the uselessness of such trinkets and lay those upon His altar as an offering for the orphan work. The prayer was answered. Her sacrifice of jewels proved a great service because it was at a time of great need. By the proceeds of the sale Mr. Mueller could meet the expenses of a whole week and also pay the salaries. But before disposing of the diamond ring,



In the kitchen

he wrote with it in the window pane of his room-JEHOVAH JIREH- and henceforth whenever in deep poverty, he cast his eyes upon those two words and he thankfully remembered that God will provide.

On one occasion a poor woman gave two pence, adding, “It is but a trifle, but I must give it to you.” Yet so opportune was the gift that one of these two pence was just what was needed to buy bread for immediate use.

What is probably the best known incident in the life of George Mueller is mentioned neither in the autobiography nor in the biographies by Pierson or Warne. It is mentioned in a biographical sketch called 'The Adventures of Sister Abigail.' The story is told in the following words.

Early one morning Abigail was playing in Mr. Mueller's garden at the orphanage. Mr. Mueller took her hand, saying, 'Come, see what our Father will do,' and he led her into the long dinning room. The plates and cups were on the table. There was nothing but empty dishes. There was no food and no money to supply the needs. The children were standing waiting for their morning meal, when Mr. Mueller said, 'Children, you know we must be in time for the school.' Then lifting his hand, said 'Dear Father we thank Thee for what Thou art going to give us to eat.'

A knock at the door was heard. The Baker stood there, and said, 'Mr. Mueller, I couldn't sleep last night. Some how I felt that you didn't have bread for the breakfast and the Lord wanted me to send you some. So I got up at two o' clock and



Tea Time

baked some fresh bread and have brought it.' George Mueller thanked the man and praised God for His care, then said, 'Children, we not only have bread, but a rare treat of fresh bread.' No sooner had he said this then there came a second knock at the door. This time it was the milkman. He announced that his milk cart had broken down in front of the orphanage, and he would like to give the children his cans of fresh

milk, so that he could empty his wagon and repair it."

During the four months of 1842, the need was so extreme that had no help come the work could have not gone. Once the dinner had to be postponed for half an hour. Such postponement was never known before and was never repeated in the entire after history of the work, though thousands of mouth had to be daily fed. During all this Mr. Mueller had a strong confidence that deliverance is always at hand.

### **The New Orphan Houses**

After nine years of existence, on October, 1845, the Lord led Mr. Mueller in a new direction. Residents on Wilson Street had started raising objections to the noise made by the children, especially in play hours. The playgrounds were no longer large enough for so many orphans. The drainage was not adequate, nor was the situation of the rented houses favorable, for proper sanitary conditions. It was also desirable to secure ground for cultivation, and thus supply outdoor work for the boys, etc. Such were some of the reasons which demanded the building of a new orphan house. So Mr. Mueller felt that a suitable site could be found on which to erect a building adapted to the purpose.

For a man, personally penniless, to attempt to erect such a house, on such a scale, without appeal to man and in sole dependence on God was no small venture of faith. First of all, ground must be bought, and it must comprise six or seven acres and the site must be in or near Bristol. Such a site would cost from two thousand to three thousand pounds.

Next the building must be constructed, fitted up, and furnished, with accommodations for three hundred orphans and their overseers, teachers, and various helpers. However plain the building and its furnishings, the total cost would reach three to four times the price of the site.

Then, the annual cost of keeping such house open and of maintaining such a large body of inmates would be four or five thousand pounds more, which would increase every year.

No man so poor as George Mueller would not have thought of such a gigantic scheme, if his faith and hope were not fixed on God. So boldly they started praying for a building.

On the thirty-sixth day after specific prayer had first been offered about this new house, on December 10, 1845, Mr. Mueller received one thousand pounds for this purpose, the largest sum yet received in one donation since the work had begun. Three days later, a Christian architect in London voluntarily offered not only to draft plans, but also to overlook the construction of the houses. Mr. Mueller then began to search a suitable site for the building. After four weeks of search his mind was drawn to Ashley Down where land suitable for his needs was found. He went twice to meet the owner but could not meet him, and so he left a message. When finally he met the owner, the owner said that he had spent two hours in the bed, thinking of what he should reply to Mr. Mueller's proposal. He finally decided that instead of selling the



Orphan House

land at two hundred per acre he would give it at hundred and twenty per acre to Mr. Mueller. The deal was made, and in six weeks started the work of construction.

Up to June 4, 1846, the total sum in hand for the building was a little more than twenty-seven hundred pounds. It was a small part only of the sum needful. But Mr. Mueller felt no doubt that in God's

own time all that was required would be given. On July 6th, two thousand pounds were given-- twice as large a gift as had yet come in one donation; and, on January 25, 1847, another like offering, so that, on July 5th, the work of building began. Six months later, after four hundred days of waiting upon God for this new orphan house, nine thousand pounds had been given in answer to believing prayer.

Two years later the building was completed and the orphans of Wilson Street began to be transferred to the new orphan house in Ashley Down. By May 26, 1850, there were three hundred and eight in the house.

Mr. Mueller's heart felt an enlarged desire that one thousand, instead of three hundred, should enjoy such privileges of temporal provision and spiritual instruction. He felt so for many reasons.

- 1) Many applications that could not be accepted for want of room.
- 2) The low moral state of the poorhouses to which these children of poverty were sent.
- 3) The large number of distressing cases of orphan hood.
- 4) The spiritual blessing possible to a larger number of homeless children.
- 5) But one reason overtopped all others: a service to man, attempted and achieved solely in dependence upon God.

What he chiefly wanted to prove by helping the orphans is that God hears



prayers and answers them. He describes how he constantly came in contact with earnest Christians who lacked the faith to trust God fully. He could see that they were thinking though they would not say that times have changed and that what was once true no longer holds true. He tried to convince them that God is unchanging. He longed to show that God is willing and able, at this present day, to help those who rely upon him. This was the compelling motive for establishing the orphan houses.

As now some four hundred and eighty-three orphans were waiting for admission, he was moved to pray that another new building should be constructed. On January 4, 1851, an offering was received of three thousand pounds- the largest single donation up to that date-which encouraged him to go forward. Mr. Mueller waited patiently on the Lord for further leading. After waiting patiently for nineteen months, he received eighty one hundred pounds, a joint donation of several Christians.

On May 26, 1856, nearly thirty thousand pounds were there in hand for the new Orphan House No. 2. By November 12, 1857, this house was constructed and opened for four hundred additional orphans. The God who provided the building also provided the helpers.

With the beginning of the New Year, Mr. Mueller began to lay aside six hundred pounds for the construction of the third orphan house. A land was bought adjoining the two buildings. As there were many applicants and the cost of providing for a larger number would be but little more, it was determined to build so as to receive four hundred and fifty instead of three hundred. Four and a half month later Orphan House No. 3 was opened.

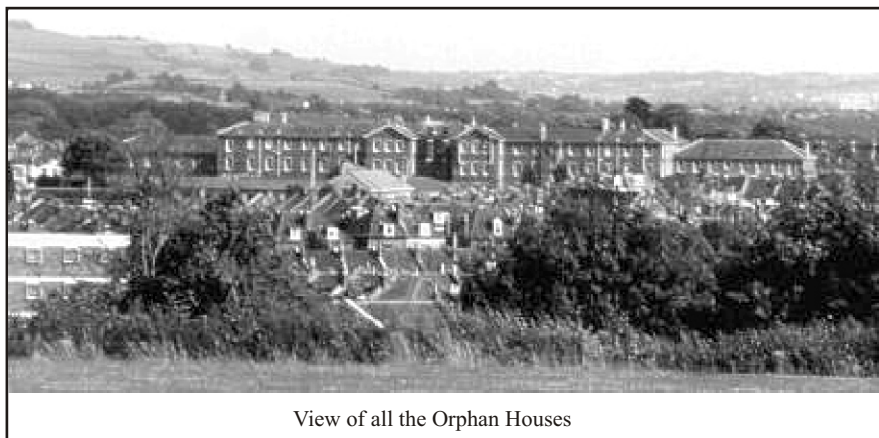
Mr. Mueller wanted further enlargement as demand for accommodation of applicants increased and past experience of God's wondrous dealings urged him both to attempt and to expect greater things. Orphan Houses No. 4 and 5 began to loom up above his horizon of faith. By May 26, 1862, he had over sixty-six hundred pounds for construction. In November, 1864, a large donation of five thousand pounds was received from a donor who kept his name and residence a secret.

Mr. Mueller's eyes were on the land adjoining the three houses already built, separated from them only by a road. When he saw the agent, he came to know that the property was leased that had yet two years to run. This obstacle only led him to more prayer, but difficulties seemed to increase. The price asked was too high, and the Bristol Water-works Company was also negotiating for this same piece of land for reservoir purposes. Nevertheless God successively removed all obstacles, so that the ground was bought and conveyed to the trustees in March, 1865. After the



purchase-money was paid, about twenty-five thousand pounds yet remained for the structures.

In May, 1866, over thirty-four thousand pounds being at Mr. Mueller's disposal, the work for the construction of No. 4 began, and in January following, No. 5 also. On November 5, 1868, new Orphan House No. 4, and on January 6, 1870, No. 5, were thrown open. Thus by 1870, five large buildings stood on Ashley Down with accommodations for two thousand orphans with all needed teachers and assistants. Between the first decision to build, in 1845, and the opening of No. 5 in 1870, twenty-five years lapsed.



View of all the Orphan Houses

The orphan houses had several prominent features. They were very spacious, built of stone, with about seventeen hundred large windows, and accommodations for over two thousand inmates. They were well planned. Utility rather than beauty was more cared of. The furniture was equally simple. Each child had a numbered compartment for clothes. In the nursery, the infant children had books and playthings to occupy and amuse them.

The cost of the houses built on Ashley Down might have staggered a man of large capital, but this poor men only cried and the Lord helped him. The first house cost fifteen thousand pounds; the second, over twenty-one thousand; the third, over twenty-three thousand; and the fourth and fifth, from fifty thousand to sixty thousand more-- so that the total cost reached about one hundred and fifteen thousand. Besides all this, there was a yearly expenditure which rose as high as twenty-five thousand for the orphans.

The daily routine of the children was something like this. The children rise at six and are expected to be ready at seven, the girls for knitting and the boys for reading. At eight o'clock the breakfast was served. Half an hour later there was a brief morning service and the school began at ten. Half an hour of recreation on the playground prepares for the one-o'clock dinner, and school resumed, until four. An hour and a half of play or outdoor exercise and half-hour service preceded the six-o'clock meal. Then the girls work with the needle, and the boys were in school, until

bedtime. The younger children went to rest at eight, and the older, at nine.

There was not a great deal of variation in the food. The food was simple, ample, and nutritious, consisting of bread, oatmeal, milk, soups, meat, rice, and vegetables. Porridge every morning for breakfast and meat for dinner on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. On Tuesdays and Sundays a dish of rice and raisins was commonplace. On Saturdays they were served broth with meat in it. Meat was either mutton - known to the children as 'Og' or corned beef. The bread was known as 'Toke' because of the grace said at meals 'We thank thee, Lord, for these tokens of thy love!' Fresh fruit and eggs were in plentiful supply and milk and water was the usual drink.

All the children in the Homes were smartly dressed. The boys were given three suits and those nine years and above wore a smart navy-blue Eton jacket, waistcoat and corduroy trousers together with a glazed peaked cap. The younger boys wore a blue shirt instead of the jacket and short cloaks were provided for bad weather conditions. The girls wore a navy blue cotton dress which was protected by a cloak, shawl or tippet according to the weather. All girls wore a straw colored bonnet tied with an attractive band.



No child left the Mueller Homes until employment had been found for them. The boys were apprenticed to a trade and some with the ability to teacher training. They were always provided with three suits and a sum of money. The girls left at 17 and went into domestic service, nursing or teacher training. They were also provided with an outfit of clothes and some money. George Mueller gave his blessing to every child on leaving his care, and gave to each a Bible.

### Daughter Lydia

Many Christian parents make the fatal mistake of giving their children, education which is wholly intellectual and not spiritual. This has led them to seek a career of mere intellectualism and worldly ambition. The Lord's tender care was shown to his beloved daughter, Lydia in this field too. It became clear in the year 1843, that for profit of the daughter, it would be better that Lydia should be taught elsewhere than at home. In answer to prayer, her father was divinely directed to a Christian sister, who had special gifts of instructing and training children. She took the responsibility of superintending the education of Lydia. Mr. Mueller expected and desired to pay for such training, and asked for the account, which was paid, but the exact sum was returned to him anonymously. For six remaining years of his daughter's stay, he did not get any further bills for her schooling. Thus God provided

for the board and education of this only child, not only without cost to her parents, but to their intense satisfaction as being under the true "nurture and admonition of the Lord." While at this school, in April, 1846, Lydia found peace in believing, and began that beautiful life in the Lord Jesus Christ, that, for forty-four years afterward, she exhibited His image.

Once Lydia was taken ill in 1846 and at this time twenty years old. The ailment developed into a malignant typhoid which, two weeks later, brought her close to death. These parents had to face the prospect of being left childless. But faith triumphed and prayer prevailed. Their darling Lydia was healed of the Lord.

The Lord's goodness and mercy was always with the worker and the work. The children were wonderfully protected and kept. Once four children from five to nine years old, and of one family, were admitted to the orphanage in a deplorable state because lack of nutrition. The question was whether they should be admitted at all. But to turn them back seemed almost inhuman. So, trusting in God, they were taken in and cared for with parental love. A few weeks later these children were physically unrecognizable, so rapid had been the improvement in health. With God's



blessing four graves less were to be dug.

When, for three years, scarlet and typhus fevers and smallpox, was prevalent in Bristol and the vicinity, threatened the orphans, prayer was again made to Him who is the God of health. There was no case of scarlet or typhus fever during the whole time, though smallpox entered into the smallest of the orphan houses. Prayer was still the one resort. The disease spread to the other houses, until at one time fifteen were ill with it. The cases, however, were mercifully light, and the Lord did allow the epidemic to spread no further.

During the next year, 1865-6, scarlet fever broke out in the orphanage. In all

thirty-nine children were ill. Whooping-cough also affected the children. It was also malignant in Bristol. In all the three houses there were but seventeen cases, and the only fatal one was that of a little girl with constitutionally weak lungs.

Again, when, in 1866, cholera developed in England. In answer to special prayer not one case of this disease was known in the orphan houses. In the autumn, whooping-cough and measles broke out. Only eight children had the former and two hundred and sixty-two, the latter, but not one child died. From May, 1866, to May, 1867, out of over thirteen hundred children under care, only eleven died, considerably less than one per cent.

Even in all these tribulation, consolation of Christ abounded. The Spirit of God worked mightily among the girls, as in the previous year among the boys, so that over one hundred became deeply earnest seekers after salvation. Mr. Mueller and his wife and helpers prayed much for God to deepen and broaden this work of His Spirit.

In January, 1866, Mr. Henry Craik, who had for thirty-six years been Mr. Mueller's valued friend, died after an illness of seven months. In Devonshire these two brethren had first known each other, and they became good friends. They together went through years of common labor and trial. They were nearly of the same age, little past sixty when Mr. Craik died. The loss was too heavy for Mueller but the goodness and mercy of God helped him and gave comfort and cheer in this dark season.

### **A Look at Gifts and the Givers**

God watches the Treasury, watching the gifts cast into it, and impartially weighing their worth. He estimates the rich man's millions and the widow's mites, not by the amount given, but by the motives which impel and the measure of self-sacrifice accepted for the Lord's sake. The ample supplies poured into Mr. Mueller's hands came alike from those who had abundance of wealth and from those whose only abundance was deep poverty. It is one of the charms of this life-story to observe the variety of persons and places, sums of money and forms of help, connected with the donations made to the Lord's work. Valuable lessons will certainly be learnt from the beautiful spirit shown by givers and from the secret history of their gifts.

Among the first givers to the work was a poor needle-woman, who, to Mr. Mueller's surprise, brought one hundred pounds. She earned only an average of three shillings and sixpence a week, and was moreover weak in body. She had received a small legacy of less than five hundred pounds from her grandmother's estate. But her father had died a drunkard and a bankrupt. Her brothers and sisters had settled with his creditors by paying them five shillings to the pound. To her conscience, this seemed robbing the creditors of three fourths of their claim, and, though they had no legal hold upon her, she privately paid them the other fifteen shillings to the pound, of the unpaid debts of her father. Moreover when her unconverted brother and two sisters gave each fifty pounds to the widowed mother, she as a child of God felt that she should give double that amount. By this time her own share of the legacy was reduced to a small remainder, and it was out of this that she gave the one hundred pounds for the orphan work! Mr. Mueller's principle was never to grasp eagerly at any gift whatever the need or the amount of the gift. Before accepting this money he had a long conversation with this woman. "The Lord Jesus," she said, "has given His

last drop of blood for me, and should I not give Him these hundred pounds!"

In May, 1842, a gold watch and chain were accompanied by a brief note. "A pilgrim does not want such a watch as this to make him happy. One of an inferior kind will do to show him how swiftly time flies, and how fast he is hastening on to that Canaan where time will be no more. It is for you to do with this what it seemeth good to you. It is the last relic of earthly vanity, and, while I am in the body, may I be kept from all idolatry!"

In March, 1884, a contribution reached Mr. Mueller from one who gave her jewelry which had been put away in accordance with 1 Peter iii.3. "But let it be the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price"

Two believers sent some money, as an offering to the Lord, instead of using to purchase an "engagement-ring." They desired their lives to be united by that highest bond, the mutual love of the Lord who spared not His own blood for them.

A gift of two thousand pounds came on January 29, 1872, accompanied by a letter. The writer was much troubled because of the possession of a property. He disposed it of when convicted of the Lord who "saw it not good" for him to hold so much.

God estimates what we give by what we keep, for it is possible to give large sums and yet keep so much money that does not allow any self-denial. Such giving to the Lord costs us nothing. In 1853, a brother in the Lord took out of his pocket a roll of bank-notes, amounting to one hundred and ten pounds, and put it into Mr. Mueller's hand, it was more than one half of his entire worldly estate.

In August, 1853, a poor widow of sixty, sold her little house which was her whole property, put the entire amount of the sale, ninety pounds, into an orphan-house box elsewhere. Those who took the money to Mr. Mueller, knowing the circumstances, urged her to retain at least a part of this sum, and prevailed on her to keep at least five pounds and sent on the other eighty-five. Mr. Mueller learning the facts, offered to pay her traveling expenses that he might have a talk with her. He found she had made up her mind ten years before the house was sold. Mr. Mueller was very reluctant to accept the gift but failed to persuade her to reconsider the step. He then kept that money for seven months and later wrote a letter to her that even if she wants it now she could take it back. But her reply convinced him and he used that money to support the foreign missionaries as she had desired.

In August, 1884, a Christian brother from the United States came to see Mr. Mueller. He informed him that he was greatly blessed of God after reading Mr. Mueller's published testimony to God's faithfulness. He sold some property which he received after his sister's death, came across the sea, that he might see the orphan houses and know their founder, for himself, and hand over to him for the Lord's work the entire gift of about seven hundred pounds.

One donor followed a principle of giving. He gave the average cost of maintaining an orphan. For each child that God had given him he supported an orphan. As his own family increased, instead of decreasing his gifts, he continued to increase, until, having seven children, he was supporting seven orphans.

An anonymous giver wrote: "It was my idea that when man had sufficient

for his own wants, he ought then to supply the wants of others, and consequently I never had sufficient. I now clearly see that God expects us to give of what we have and not of what we have not. I therefore give in faith and love, knowing that if I first seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all other things will be added unto me."

In 1870, Mrs. Mueller left to her heavenly abode. She did not live long enough to see the last of the New Orphan Houses opened. For more than thirty-four years, this beloved, devoted wife had also been a sympathetic helper in the work of God. Mrs. Mueller shared with her husband the united object to live only and wholly for God. They had always abundance of work for God at hand, and they were heartily united to do it.

"She was God's own gift, exquisitely suited to me even in natural temperament. Thousands of times I said to her, 'My darling, God Himself singled you out for me, as the most suitable wife I could possibly wish to have had.'" This was Mr. Mueller's tribute to his wife.

She was skilled in the languages and in such higher studies as astronomy, but in mathematics also. This last qualification made her for thirty-four years an invaluable help to her husband. Month by month she examined all the account-books, and the hundreds of bills of the matrons of the orphan houses.

Mrs. Mueller and her husband met together often thrice a day for a time of united prayer and praise when they brought before the Lord the matters which at the time called for thanksgiving and supplication. They were one when it came in the matter of giving to the Lord. After his wife Mary's death he wrote: "I so well remember that I used to tell my beloved departed wife that I had put £100 or £200, or less or more to the building fund or the missions and she would, with a affectionate smile, say, "Thank you, my dear." For nearly forty years Mrs. Mueller was known by all as a most valuable, lovely, and holy woman. She had been a blessing beyond description, and to her daughter Lydia, wise and tender mother and a sympathetic companion. The loss to them both could never be made up on earth.

Sixteen months after the death of her mother, Mr. James Wright, asked Mr. Mueller the hand of beloved Lydia in marriage. Mr. Mueller had known Mr. Wright for more than thirty years, even from his boyhood. He had been watching his growth in the things of God. For thirteen years he had been his "right hand" in all important matters. Mr. Mueller knew well that he was one on whom he could with joyful confidence entrust his choicest remaining earthly treasure. He encouraged his daughter to accept Mr. Wright's love. On November 16, 1871, they were married, and began a life of mutual prayer and sympathy which, like that of her father and mother, proved happy, helpful, and useful.

Mr. Mueller felt his own lonely condition keenly. He felt the need of some one to share his toils and prayers, and help him in the Lord's work, and decided that he should marry again. After much prayer, he asked the hand of Miss Susannah Grace to become his wife. He had known her for more than twenty-five years as a consistent disciple, well fitted to be his helper in the Lord. He then married Miss Susannah Grace, who for years after joined him in prayer, unselfish giving, and labors for souls.

From May, 1880, to May 1881, a gracious work of the Spirit had visited the orphans on Ashley Down and in many of the schools. During the three months spent by Mr. Mueller at home before sailing for America in September, 1880, he and his helpers had prayed much for a visitation of grace. When he was in America, news came from home of a blessed work of conversion already in progress, and which went on for nearly a year. In the five houses, five hundred and twelve orphans had found God their Father in Christ and nearly half as many more were in a hopeful state.

What would happen to the work when the master workman would be no more was the question that was now being asked. To all such questions he had always one answer ready, the Living God. He who had built the orphan houses could maintain them. He, who had raised up one humble man to oversee the work in His name, could provide for a worthy successor.

Nevertheless much prayer was offered that the Lord would provide such a successor, and, in Mr. James Wright, the prayer was answered. Mr. and Mrs. Mueller, felt divinely assured that God would fit the entire burden of responsibility on the shoulders of Mr. James Wright and Lydia Mueller.

### **The Missionary Tours of George Mueller**

Mr. George Mueller at sixty-five, became a missionary to the world, a thing which he always dreamt of. For a major part of seventeen years, the end period of his life he spent in witnessing the prayer-hearing God. The extensive missionary tours occupied the evening of Mr. Mueller's useful life, from 1875 to 1892. They reached, more or less, over Europe, America, Asia, Africa, and Australia.

In 1874, he was preaching in the Isle of Wight, and a beloved Christian brother, who heard him speak remarked, "that day had been the happiest of his whole life." This remark, with others like it made previously, so impressed him that the Lord was about to use him to help on believers outside of Bristol. He determined not to confine his labors in the Word and doctrine to any one place, but to go wherever a door might open for his testimony.

March 26, 1875, is an important date, as it marks the starting-point. He himself calls this "the beginning of his missionary tour."

From Bristol he went to Brighton, Lewes, and Sunderland-- on the way to Sunderland preaching to a great audience in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, at Mr. Spurgeon's request. This tour closed on June 5th, after seventy addresses in public, during ten weeks.

After six weeks, on August 14th, the second tour began. Mr. Mueller felt a keen desire to follow up the revival work of Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey. Their short stay in each place enabled them to lead new converts to higher attainments in knowledge and grace. Mueller accordingly followed these evangelists in England, Ireland, and Scotland, staying in each place from one week to six, and seeking to educate and edify those who had been led to Christ. For nearly eleven months, Mr. Mueller preached at least three hundred and six times, an average of about one sermon a day.

The third tour was in Europe. It occupied most of the year closing May 26, 1877, and included Paris, various places in Switzerland, Prussia and Holland,



Alsace, Wurtemberg, Baden, Hesse Darmstadt, etc. Altogether over three hundred addresses were given in about seventy cities and villages to all of which he had been invited by letter. Mr. Mueller found that, through his work and his writings, he was as well known abroad, as in England.

The fourth tour took him to America. It extended from August, 1877, to June of the next year. For many years invitations had been coming with growing frequency, from the United States and Canada. He was led to recognize in them the call of God to thousands of Germans across the Atlantic. Mr. and Mrs. Mueller, landed at Quebec and then went to the United States, where, during ten months, his labors stretched over a vast area, including the States of New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, and Missouri. He spoke frequently to large congregations of Germans, and, in the Southern States, to the colored population.

On September 5, 1878, he and his wife began the fifth missionary tour to Europe, in Spain and Italy. The Lord opened many doors among the poorer and humbler classes and in the middle and higher ranks. In the Riviera, he had access to many of the nobility and aristocracy. At Mentone, he and Mr. Spurgeon met each other. In Spain, Mr. Mueller was greatly gladdened by seeing for himself the schools, entirely supported by the funds of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution.

After another ten weeks in Bristol, he and his wife sailed again for America, in the last week of August, 1879, landing at New York. This visit took him through many states of America.

On September 15, 1880, they embarked on their seventh mission tour, landing, ten days later, at Quebec. Mr. Mueller always had problems during long voyages. During his earlier crossing to the continent he had suffered much from seasickness. But he had undertaken these long voyages, not for his own pleasure or profit, but wholly on God's errand. By God's mercies this particular voyage was free from all problems. From Quebec he went to Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

The eighth preaching tour, from August 23, 1881, to May 30, 1882, was given to the Continent of Europe, where Mr. Mueller was led by the low state of religious life in Switzerland and Germany. This visit was extended to the Holy Land. After speaking at Alexandria, Cairo, and Port Said, he went to Jaffa, and then to Jerusalem, on November 28. With reverence, he touched the soil once trodden by the feet of the Son of God, visiting, with pathetic interest, Gethsemane and Golgotha, and crossing the Mount of Olives to Bethany, then to Bethlehem and back to Jaffa.

During the ninth tour, from August 8, 1882, to June 1, 1883, he labored in Germany, Austria, and Russia, including Bavaria, Hungary, Bohemia, Saxony, and Poland. He with great happiness bore witness in Kroppenstädt, his birthplace, after an absence of about sixty-four years. At St. Petersburg, he was a guest of Princess Lieven, and at her mansion he met and ministered to many of high rank.

On September 26, 1883, the tenth tour began, this time his face being turned toward the Orient. He labored in India which was the twenty-third country visited in his tours. Though now seventy nine he traveled over 1,000 miles, and spoke over two

hundred times, to missionaries and Christian workers, European residents, Eurasians, Hindus, Moslems, educated natives, native boys and girls in the orphanage at Colar, etc.

After some months of preaching in England, Scotland, and Wales, The eleventh missionary tour started on November 19, 1885. He and his wife set out on their fourth visit to the United States. It was on that same trip the Mueller were invited to the White House to meet President and Mrs. Hayes. Crossing the Pacific, they went to Sydney, New South Wales, and, after seven months in Australia, sailed for Java, and then to China, arriving at Hong Kong on September 12th. They then went to Japan and the Straits of Malacca.

Less than two months after their arrival, on August 12, 1887, he sailed for South Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, Ceylon, and India. This twelfth tour closed in March, 1890, having covered thousands of miles. The intense heat at one time compelled Mr. Mueller to leave Calcutta, and on the railway journey to Darjeeling his wife feared he would die. But he was mercifully spared. It was on this tour and in the month of January, 1890, while at Jabulpur, preaching, that a letter was put to Mr. Mueller of his dear Lydia's death. For nearly thirty years she had labored at the orphan houses and no one could fit into her shoes. For fourteen years she had been her husband's ideal companion, and for nearly fifty-eight years her father's unspeakable treasure. Mr. Mueller's as well as Mr. Wright were kept at rest by the strong confidence that all things work together for good. (Romans viii.28.)

This sudden bereavement led Mr. Mueller to bring his mission tour in the East to a close and depart for Bristol. After two months, once more Mr. and Mrs. Mueller left home for Europe. Twelve months were spent in Germany and Holland, Austria and Italy. This absence in fact included two tours, with no interval between them, and concluded the series of extensive journeys which lasted seventeen years.

This man-- from his seventieth to his eighty-seventh year-- when most men are withdrawing from all activities, had traveled to forty-two countries and over two hundred thousand miles, a distance equivalent to nearly eight journeys round the globe. He estimated that during these seventeen years he had addressed over three million people.

George Mueller ended his travels in 1892 in his eighty eighth year. It had now become apparent to him the importance of his second wife, Susannah. She had greatly assisted in the circulation of thousands of tracts in many different languages and had spoken privately to thousands of people about the Christian Gospel.

In all these mission tours, again, the faithfulness of God was seen in supplying every need. Steamer fares, long railway journeys, hotel accommodations, demanded a heavy outlay and a new mode of life. It was at least three times as costly as the former frugal housekeeping. Yet, in answer to prayer and without any appeal to human help, the Lord furnished all that was required.

Prayer was George Mueller's answer to every problem, even when it came to influencing the forces of nature. In 1877, when the Mueller were aboard the ship 'Sardinian' bound for the United States, they ran into dense fog off the coast of Newfoundland, which severely slowed down their progress. George Mueller told the captain of his need to be in Quebec the following Saturday afternoon to which the

captain replied, "That is impossible." The captain thought George Mueller was mad when he suggested they should go to the chart-room and pray. When the captain pointed out the density of the fog, George Mueller replied, 'My eye is not on the density of the fog, but on the living God, who controls every circumstance of my life.' After George Mueller prayed he invited the captain to open the door. The fog had lifted. This story was subsequently re-told by the captain himself, who became a Christian.

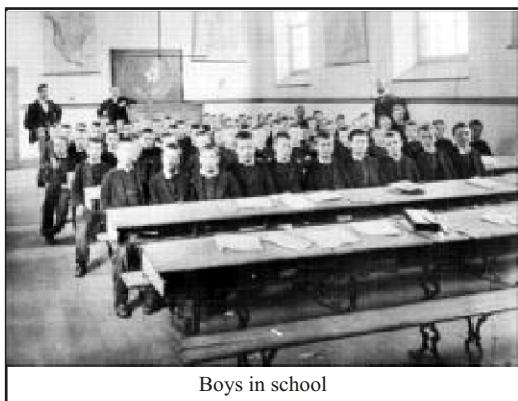
Two other facts are worth mentioning in connection with these tours. Firstly, God's gracious guiding and guarding of the work at Bristol so that it suffered nothing from his absence. Secondly, these journeys had no connection with collecting of money for the work or even informing the public of it. No reference was made to the Institution at Bristol, except when requested. No collections were ever made for it.

Five years after Mrs. Wright's death, Mr. Mueller was left again a widower. His last great mission tour had come to an end in 1892, and in 1895, on the 13th of January, the beloved wife who in all these long journeys had been his constant companion and helper, passed to her rest.

### **The Fruits of his Work**

George Mueller's life was one long witness to the prayer-hearing God, and, throughout, God witnessed to all that he was a prayer hearing God and he heard Mr. Mueller's prayers and accepted his work. The pages of his journal are full of striking examples of this witness.

Ten thousand motherless and fatherless children found a home and tender parental care in the institution founded by George Mueller, and were there fed, clad, and taught, before he was called up higher. His efforts to improve their state physically, morally, and spiritually were fully owned of God.

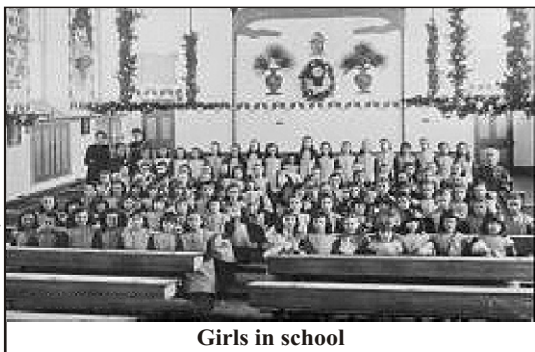


Ignorance is usually the handmaid of poverty. A careful effort was made to give these children good educational foundation. The success of the education of these orphans can be judged by the reports of the school inspector. From year to year these pupils were examined in reading, writing, arithmetic, Scripture, dictation, geography, history, grammar, composition, and singing. The Inspector reported in 1885 that an average per cent of all marks was as high as 91.1, and

even this was surpassed the next year when it was 94, and, two years later, when it was 96.1.

The one main aim of Mr. Mueller and his whole staff of helpers, from first to last, was to save the children's soul. To bring them up in the nurture and

admonition of the Lord. The hindrances were many and formidable. They had a legacy of sin and crime. Many of these little ones had no proper bringing up till they entered the orphan houses. They were in fact trained in Satan's schools of drink and lust. And yet, Mr. Mueller records, with devout thankfulness, that "the Lord had constrained them, on the whole, to behave exceedingly well, so much so as to attract the attention of observers."



**Girls in school**

Frequently, extensive revivals had been known among them when hundreds have found the Lord. The year ending May 26, 1858 was especially notable for the unprecedented work of the Spirit of God, which resulted in many conversions. Within a few days more than fifty of the one hundred and forty girls in Orphan House No. 1 were under conviction of sin, and the work spread into the other departments, till about sixty were exercising faith. In July, 1859, again, in a school of one hundred and twenty girls more than half were brought under deep spiritual concern. In January and February, 1860, another mighty wave of Holy Spirit power swept over the institution. It began among little girls from six to nine years old, then extended to the older girls, and then to the boys, until, in ten days, above two hundred were inquiring and in many instances found immediate peace. The young converts at once asked to hold prayer meetings among themselves, and were permitted. Many began to labor and pray for others, and, out of the seven hundred orphans then in charge, some two hundred and sixty were shortly regarded as either converted or in a most hopeful state.

Again, in 1872, the Holy Spirit so moved that hundreds were converted. Constant prayer for their souls made the orphan homes a hallowed place. It was believed that seven hundred and twenty-nine might be safely counted as being disciples of Christ. A series of such blessings have crowned the sincere endeavors of all who had charge of these children. During the thirty years between 1865 and 1895, two thousand five hundred and sixty-six orphans were known to have left the institution as believers, an average of eighty-five every year.

Not only had these orphans been blessed in health, educated in mind, converted to God, and made useful Christian citizens, but many of them had become fathers or mothers of Christian households. A man and a woman who were formerly orphans became husband and wife, and they had eight children, all earnest disciples, one of whom went as a foreign missionary to Africa.

Wherever Mr. Mueller went he met converted orphans or was hearing of their work. Sometimes in great cities ten or fifteen would be waiting at the close of a meeting to shake the hand of their "father," and tell him of their debt of gratitude and love. He found them in every conceivable sphere of service, many of them having

strong holds in the principles taught in the orphan house.

The first two children received into No. 1 both became true believers and zealous workers. One, a Congregational deacon and the other, a laborious and successful clergyman in the Church of England, and both largely used of God in soul-winning. One, Mr. Wilkinson, who, up to the age of fourteen and a half years had been taught at the orphanage, did great service during the Civil War in America. He held fast his faith in the Lord Jesus, and was a happy and consistent Christian.

As one orphan recalled upon leaving, "My belongings were my Bible, my clothes and half a crown and, best of all, was the priceless blessing of George Mueller's prayers." Another remarked, "The greatest thing that has ever happened to me was at the Mueller Homes because there I learnt about the Lord Jesus. Through the teaching that had been put into my heart as a child, I gave that same heart to the Lord one day, and I have never regretted it."

Another main encouragement and reward for Mr. Mueller was the knowledge that his example had emboldened other believers to attempt like work for God, on like principles. This he himself regarded as the greatest blessing resulting from his life-work, that hundreds of thousands of children of God had been led in various parts of the world to trust in God in all simplicity. In December, 1876, Mr. Mueller heard of a Christian evangelist who after reading about the orphan work in Bristol, also began to start a similar work, solely in dependence on the Lord. He began in 1863 with three orphans at Nimwegen in Holland, and fourteen years after, over four hundred and fifty were in the institution. On his first visit to Tokyo, Japan, he came to know about Mr. Ishii, a native Christian Japanese, who also started an orphanage upon a similar basis of prayer, faith, and dependence upon the Living God. On Mr. Mueller's second visit to the Island he found this orphan work prospering.

The Scriptural Knowledge Institution and its various departments was also a great means of blessing. Already in the year ending May 26, 1860, hundreds of Christian workers had been more or less aided. The circulation of Mr. Mueller's Narrative also proved to be a great blessing. In November, 1856, Mr. James McQuilkin, a young Irishman, was converted, and early in the next year, read the first two volumes of that Narrative. He said to himself: "Mr. Mueller obtains all this simply by prayer; so may I be blessed by the same means," and he began to pray. First of all he received from the Lord, in answer, a spiritual companion, and then two more. The little company of praying souls slowly grew. During the Christmas, that year, Mr. McQuilkin, with the two brethren who had first joined him-- one of whom was Mr. Jeremiah Meneely, held meeting by request at Ahoghill. Two weeks later another meeting was held. God's Spirit began to work mightily and conversions rapidly multiplied. Some converts bore the sacred coals and kindled the fire elsewhere, and in many places revival flames began to burn. Such was the starting-point of one of the most widespread revivals ever known in our century. The next year it spread to England, Wales, and Scotland. Thousands found Christ, and walked in newness of life.

Thus, before the Lord called George Mueller higher, He had given him a foretaste of his reward, in the physical, intellectual and spiritual profit of the orphans,

in the fruits of his wide seed-sowing in other lands as well as Britain, in the scattering of God's word and Christian literature, in the Christian education of thousands of children in the schools he aided, in the assistance to hundreds of devoted missionaries, in the large blessing imparted by his published narrative, and in his personal privilege of bearing witness throughout the world to the Gospel of grace.

A comprehensive summary is contained in this Fifty-ninth Report, of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, Remarkable growth is apparent during the sixty-four years since the outset of the work in 1834.

During the year ending May 26, 1898,

- ▶ Missionary laborers aided, 115. Money expended, £2082 9s. 6d.; from the outset, £261,859 7s. 4d.
- ▶ The Bibles and parts thereof circulated, 15,411; from the beginning, 1,989,266. Money expended for this purpose the past year, £439; from the first, £41,090 13s. 3d.
- ▶ The number of day-schools was 7, and of pupils, 354; the number of children in attendance from the beginning, 81,501.
- ▶ The number of home Sunday-schools, 12, and of children in them, 1,341; but from the beginning, 32,944.
- ▶ The number of Sunday-schools aided in England and Wales, 25. The amount expended in connection with home schools, £736 13s. 10d.; from the outset, £109,992 19s. 10d.
- ▶ Circulation of books and tracts, 3,101,338. Money spent, £1001 3s.; and from the first, £47,188 11s. 10d.
- ▶ The number of orphans on Ashley Down, 1620; and from the first, 10,024. Money spent in orphan houses, last year £22,523 13s. 1d.; and from the beginning, £988,829.

It is astonishing how the work grew so large. The work of a great God and a humble man. The orphan work started from a small rented house, accommodating thirty orphans and it grew to five immense structures accommodating two thousand and fifty inmates. How seldom has the world seen such vast and, at the same time, rapid enlargement! Look at the outlay! At first a small expenditure of perhaps five hundred pounds for the first year of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, and of five hundred pounds for the first twelve month of the orphan work, and in the last year of Mr. Mueller's life a grand total of over twenty-seven thousand five hundred, for all the purposes of the Institution.

Here was one poor man who was dependent only on the help of God. The sum total of the money thus spent during sixty years has thus reached very nearly the astonishing aggregate of one and a half million of pounds (£1,500,000). At present day prices, this would be well over £75,000,000. Had this happened two or three thousand years ago the same skeptics would, undoubtedly, have questioned its authenticity. As it happened in the latter part of the nineteenth century with modern records and factual evidence, the facts can be challenged but certainly not disputed.

Mr. Mueller himself points out in his narrative regarding the abundance of

funds. He says, "The almost universal complaint of religious institutions and societies is the want of funds. But we state joyfully, to the praise of the Lord, that through Him, our patron, we not only have had enough, but have abounded, though the expenses of the last three years amounted altogether to £113,522. With regard to pecuniary supplies, I have, simply in answer to prayer, and without application to any one, obtained for this work, £430,000."

Mr. Mueller showed that every man who walks with God, and finds Him a present Help in every time of need, who puts His promises to the practical proof and verifies them in actual experience, every believer who with the key of faith unlocks God's mysteries, and with the key of prayer unlocks God's treasures, shows to the human race the fact that "He is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

Mr. Mueller set a personal example of giving. All who worked with Mr. Mueller emulated his frugality, simplicity, and economy. His gifts to the work aggregated eighty-one thousand pounds. Mr. Mueller had received increasingly large sums from the Lord which he invested well and most profitably, so that for over sixty years he never lost a penny through a bad speculation! But his investments were not in lands or banks or railways, but in the work of God. Mr. Mueller's entire personal estate at his death, £169 9s. 4d., of which the cost of books, household furniture, etc., itself was over one hundred pounds. The only money in his possession being a little over sixty pounds, and even this was also awaiting disbursement. He had some general remarks about his attitude to money, "If I were left to myself, I should even now, after all the experience I have had, become a lover of money, and hold it fast, and seek to increase my possessions more and more; for I am a calculating business man." But it was the grace of God. When he viewed his life from the point of view of Heaven, Bethlehem, gratitude constrained him to give back gladly of that which had been freely given to him.

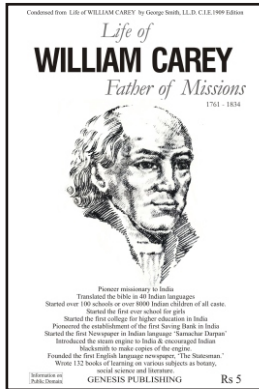
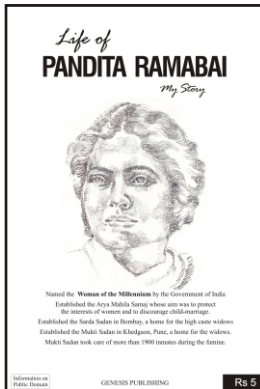
From May, 1892, when the last mission tour closed, he devoted himself to the work of the Scriptural Knowledge Institution, and to preaching at Bethesda. Even in his ninety-second year his health was marvelous, considering how, as a young man, he suffered from frequent and serious illnesses. Toward the close of life Mr. Mueller, acting under medical advice, slowed down somewhat of his active labors. On Sunday morning, March 6, 1898, he spoke at Alma Road Chapel, and on the Monday evening at the prayer service at Bethesda. On both occasions he was in his usual fine health. On Thursday morning, March 10th, at about seven o'clock, the usual cup of tea was taken to his room. There was no response to the knock at the door. The attendant opened the door and found the venerable patriarch lay dead, on the floor beside the bed. His medical adviser, who was promptly called, gave his opinion that he had died of heart-failure some hour or two before he had been found by his attendant.

Such a departure, even at such an age, produced a world-wide sensation. Not only in Bristol, or in Britain alone, but across the mighty waters hearts bled all over the globe when it was announced, by telegraph wire and ocean cable, that George Mueller was dead. The funeral, which took place on the Monday following, was a popular tribute of affection. Tens of thousands of people reverently stood along the route of the simple procession. A brief service was held at Orphan House No. 3,

## MUELLER'S DEATH

where over a thousand children met, who lost a "father." Mr. James Wright gave the address, reminding that death comes to everyone while the Lord tarries; that it is blessed to die in the Lord; and that for believers in Christ there is a glorious resurrection waiting. The tears that ran down those young cheeks were more eloquent than any words, as a token of affection for the dead. Among those who followed the bier were four who had been occupants of that first orphan home in Wilson Street. The children's grief melted the hearts of spectators, and eyes unused to weeping were moistened that day. The various carriages bore the medical attendants, the relatives and connections of Mr. Mueller, the elders and deacons of the churches with which he was associated, and his staff of helpers in the work on Ashley Down. Then followed forty or fifty other vehicles with deputations from various religious bodies, etc. At Bethesda, every foot of space was crowded, and hundreds sought in vain for admission. Then body was borne to its resting-place in Arno's Vale Cemetery, and buried beside the bodies of Mr. Mueller's first and second wives, some eighty carriages joining in the procession to the grave.

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