

# Rees Howells Intercessor

by  
Norman  
Grubb



The Welsh  
Coal miner  
a Prince  
with God

*By the same Author*

TOUCHING THE INVISIBLE  
THE LAW OF FAITH  
THE LIBERATING SECRET  
ONCE CAUGHT, NO ESCAPE  
THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD  
LEAP OF FAITH  
C. T. STUDD  
SPONTANEOUS YOU  
GOD UNLIMITED  
CONTINUOUS REVIVAL  
WHO AM I?

# REES HOWELLS

## INTERCESSOR

*by*

NORMAN P. GRUBB

*'He staggered not at the promise of  
God through unbelief; but was  
strong in faith, giving glory  
to God'.*

ROM. 4:20



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## FOREWORD

I COUNT it as one of the great privileges of my life to have had a hand in preparing this biography of Rees Howells. I first met Mr. Howells in 1928. I was then a missionary on furlough, and as I spent a few days with him at the Bible College of Wales, which was then in its young days, light simply poured into my soul as he took time to tell me some of the Lord's inner dealings with him. It was one of the great experiences of my life. I learned secrets of the Spirit—as the One come down to do His mighty work through human agents—which revolutionized my future ministry.

In the years that followed I had many periods of intimate fellowship with Mr. Howells, although I always wondered why I was allowed such a privilege, and it came to my mind on many occasions how much I would like to get that testimony, that light the Lord had revealed to His servant, those marvellous dealings of the Spirit with him, into print for the world. It now seems as if it was an unrecognized preparation for what was coming. I never dreamed that the Lord would so suddenly take His servant; but as soon as I heard, back came those thoughts of past years.

It was because of this that Samuel Howells, Mr. Rees Howells's only son, and Mrs. Rees Howells, offered me the great honour of writing his life. But I now want to make it clear that I have only been, as it were, the senior member of a writing team. First, Miss Mary Henderson,

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Mr. Howells's honorary secretary, for the past ten years had faithfully recorded his morning and evening talks in the College—eighty manuscript books of them and packed with references to his own experiences—and then in preparation for the biography had spent weeks in indexing them, so that I could get straight to the important passages. We have been daily co-workers in preparing the book, and she has been able to keep me on the straight and narrow path of accuracy on many points, and add vital tit-bits of information.

Then Dr. Kingsley Priddy, the headmaster of the Bible College School, has dedicated hours of his time to going over every chapter and offering many valuable suggestions. With his keenly sensitive appreciation of the spiritual content of Mr. Howells's life, he has been able again and again to put the needed touch to bring out the inner essence of an incident.

Combined with this has been the work of Miss Marie Scott, B.A. As teacher of English literature in the School and College, as well as being one of those whose life was revolutionized through her contacts with Mr. Howells, she has smoothed out many an uncouth passage, and often added touches of inspiration.

Miss Doris Ruscoe, B.A., the headmistress, has been another member of the team and helped particularly in hammering out the best methods of producing the biography; and finally, all has been checked by Mr. Samuel Howells, M.A., the present Director of the Bible College, and by Mrs. Rees Howells, who was with her husband from the earliest days of his ministry and was herself eye witness of a great deal recorded in the book.

I have found it a most healthy and exhilarating experience to produce a book as a team instead of as an individual, and we have been wonderfully conscious every day of the Lord's good hand on us.

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For some of the facts of Rees Howells's early days, we have been indebted to his eldest brother, Mr. John Howells, who was always greatly respected by the family, and to another brother, Mr. Dick Howells, a retired mine-manager, and to his sister, Nurse Catherine Howells, who was deeply devoted to him, and to Mr. Tom Howells, the only remaining member of the family still living in the old home.

Beyond measure large-hearted, irrepressible in the joy of the Lord which poured out of him ("The Spirit is full of jokes," he once daringly said), this man of God, who bore on his heart the world's deep suffering and sin till it broke him, could have told his own tale with so much more vividness than we could ever put into it; but may God reveal, even through these pages, Himself through the veil of human flesh, through a man "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Mr. Morgan James, a retired official of the Great Western Railway, and a friend of Mr. Howells, well said, "He was the biggest-hearted Christian I ever met." The men of God of his generation recognized the peculiar anointing of God upon him: Lord Radstock; Mr. Albert Head, the chairman of the Keswick Convention; Mr. D. E. Hoste, the director of the China Inland Mission; Mr. Stephen Jeffreys, so mightily used in evangelism and healing, who in his last years leaned much on Mr. Howells's faith; Mr. Dan Williams, founder of the Apostolic Church; Mr. Paget Wilkes of the Japan Evangelistic Band; the Rev. Andrew Murray, who wrote of him in a booklet and asked him to come for a visit; Miss Bentham of Dr. Barnardo's; Mrs. Charles Cowman, author of *Streams in the Desert*.

Mr. Henry Griffiths, a Group Accountant of the National Coal Board, said this of his first acquaintance

## FOREWORD

with him in 1921: "I read about the mighty movement of the Spirit through him in Africa. He was coming to Llanelly, so I walked three miles that night to hear him, and after that I walked twelve miles to hear him. He was to me the most wonderful missionary I had read of. His way of speaking was different, the Spirit had so dealt with him. I remember one young Christian asking him how he knew God's voice, and he said, 'Can't you tell your mother's voice from any other?' 'Yes, of course,' the young man answered. 'Well, I know His voice just like that.' I shall never forget the meetings in the Llandrindod Convention after he came back from Africa. Frankly, he was by himself. He was only about forty years old and in the strength of his manhood. He lifted the meeting to such a plane that everyone was spellbound. No one could move, no one could follow him. He was requested to test the meeting and asked who would like to give themselves to God as he had done, and everyone stood up, ministers and all. At a ministers' meeting the next day, to which I was allowed to come, Mr. Paget Wilkes was speaking. He was quick enough to recognize the Spirit in Mr. Howells, and said, 'There is someone here among us, and I feel like going round the country with him, carrying his bag and cleaning his boots.'"

May God meet with many in reading this book, as He has met with the author in writing it.

N.P.G.

## *Chapter One*

### EARLY YEARS

**R**EEES HOWELLS WAS BORN ON OCTOBER 10, 1879, the sixth of a family of eleven. The little white-washed cottage still stands on the Llandilo Road, in the mining village of Brynamman, South Wales, where Thomas and Margaret Howells brought up their three girls and eight boys. It is a wonder that the little home could contain them!

It was a hard struggle in the early years. Rees's father had employment in the iron works, and afterwards in a coal mine. His wages, the sole source of income for the family, was the handsome sum of 2s. 3d. or 2s. 6d. a day, and sometimes, when a strike was on, there would be nothing at all, and no Unemployment Benefit. In later years he opened a little shop in the village for the sale and repair of shoes, and things became easier as the older children left school and went to work.

But they were a happy family, for godliness and love were pre-eminent in the home. His mother's love was one of the deepest impressions on Rees's young life, especially as he watched her ceaselessly nursing one of the three little members of their circle who were later taken from them. As for the proud father, a visitor one day puzzled young Rees by looking round on all the children and exclaiming to his father, "How rich you are!" "How could he say you are rich?" Rees asked him later. "Well, how much would I sell you for?" answered his father. "For £1,000? Or would I sell

John, David or Dick for £1,000 each? That's how rich I am!"

Most of the children started work in the local tin mill, at the bottom of the valley below the village. The only education they had was in the one village school. They were not supposed to be employed before they were thirteen years old, but when Rees was only twelve and was taking food down to his brothers in the mill, the manager asked him one day if he would like to do a little work. His name would not be on the pay roll, but he would give him a wage and put it down in the name of his brother Moses. So Rees's schooling ended at twelve, and the next ten years were spent in the tin mill, where he was considered a good worker. His job claimed him for twelve hours a day, rising at 6 a.m. and not returning home till nearly 6 p.m.

Both Rees and his brothers felt their need for further education and attended night classes weekly in the village school. In those days there was no such thing as a library in the village; the only reading centre was a little newspaper shop, where for a penny a month they could go and read the newspaper or borrow a book. By these means two of his brothers passed several examinations, John, the eldest, joining the Railway Company, and Dick becoming a colliery manager. Rees himself did not take up any specific line of study, but he did show signs of organizing capacity! When his mother would give the boys odd jobs to do, the others would each do their own, but Rees would usually manage to get about half a dozen of his friends to help him—and then ask his mother to give them all dinner! She must have wondered if it was worth asking Rees to do a job!

The generosity, which was such a marked characteristic of his later life, was also to be seen in his boyhood

days. He would give all he had away. One of his brothers tells how a customer came into the shop to buy some shoes, when his father was absent. The customer tried to persuade this brother to reduce the price from 3s. 9d. to 2s. 6d., but he refused. A few days later she called in and told the story to his father, giving a description of "the salesman", which could fit either Rees or the brother. It didn't take the father a second to choose, for he knew Rees couldn't have refused her!

Rees developed a fine physique, and was interested in physical training. He brought home dumb-bells, boxing gloves, and so on, and took his brothers on in friendly fights. A healthy appetite accompanied a healthy body. Dick and Rees arrived back late some nights from their various occupations. If Dick came in first, so the story goes, his mother who had gone upstairs would call down, "Is that you, Dick? Help yourself to a piece of tart." But if Rees preceded Dick, his mother would call down, "Is that you, Rees? There's a tart on the table. Leave a piece for Dick"!

But outstanding from Rees's earliest days was his consciousness of God. It seemed as if an invisible Presence overshadowed him from birth, the One who, as with Paul, separated him from his mother's womb and called him by His grace. In this respect Rees's grandparents were the most powerful influence on his early years. Their home was another little white-washed cottage, called Pentwyn, up on the Black Mountain, and to cross their threshold, Rees said in later years, was to pass from earth to heaven. They had been converted in the 1859 Revival, and Rees always believed that their blessing came down to him. Something drew him in that little home: "God was its atmosphere," he would say. He loved the walk from his own home down in the Amman Valley, up through the fields, leaving the houses

behind one by one, until an iron gate clanged behind him, and he was out in the silent spaces of the mountain slopes, which in future years were so often to be his trysting place with God, where the only sounds that disturbed the stillness were the song of the lark, the occasional bleating of sheep, and the music of the tumbling mountain stream.

Over the crest young Rees would go, down the other side, with the eight miles of green Welsh valley spread out before him, till he reached his loved Pentwyn, perched on the steep slopes, where the moorland gave place again to hedges and fields; and as he crossed the threshold, he would usually hear the sound of his grandmother's voice reading the Bible to his invalid Uncle Dick. It reminds us of another young lad who probably spent many an hour on another Black Mountain, Kara-Dagh, with Lystra at its foothills, where young Timothy was also brought up under the godly influence of his "grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice."

Indeed, the young men of Bible times, like Joseph and David, who feared and served God from their boyhood days, had a great influence on Rees. His wise father had brought the children up on the Bible stories; Rees's earliest memories were of those evening readings and their effect on him. The story of the Saviour, His birth and life and death, stood out above all others, and kept him from ever taking His name in vain or daring to sin against Him.

Even the normal pleasures of the world had no attraction for him. He would walk miles to hear someone preach and bring him "under the influence of God," but he "wouldn't cross the road to hear a concert." Only once did he even attend a football match. As the crowd were "shouting and bawling" around him, he felt it was not the place for him, and vowed that, when he got his

feet out of it, he would never go to such a place again. He never did.

The Apostle Paul makes that striking statement about serving God, as did his forefathers, with pure conscience, and Rees seemed another example of it. "I didn't run into sin," he said years later. "There was always a restraint on me. It seems that some people are much more sensitive than others, even before conversion. I marred my conscience once, when my father sent me to deliver some shoes to a customer, and I asked him for 1s. 10d. when the correct price was 1s. 9d., and spent the penny on apples. Although I confessed my sin to my father, I never got that out of my mind—especially when I saw apples! I had marred my conscience. Of course, because it had that effect on me, it kept me from anything bigger." But it also had another effect, from which he had to be disillusioned later, for he added, "I thought in those days that probably I had been born with a good nature!"

He became a member of the chapel at thirteen, resolving, according to the light he then had, that he must now "live up to the teaching of the Saviour." He got this idea from reading Sheldon's book, *In His Steps*, only to find out later, of course, that he couldn't do it.

Contact with the other young fellows in the tin mill did not alter his tastes. Swansea was only about twenty miles away, but "city life, a superficial life, never appealed to me," he said. "It was no test to me not to go to a theatre; I didn't like such places. I was at home in the chapels and prayer meetings. Nature—the hills and valleys and running streams—appealed to me. Sunday mornings were wonderful times to me: such a hush and peace over everything. I felt I could face God every night, because I lived such a clean, pure life, and there were hundreds in Wales who lived like that."

Quiet, good living, hard working, there was not much

to attract attention to this young Welsh lad or to inspire prophecies for the future, except perhaps an unusual piety, which might be strange to English eyes, though maybe not to Welsh. But is it not God who turns the ordinary into the extraordinary when He is given a chance?

## *Chapter Two*

### TWO SHOCKS

**N**OT UNTIL REES WAS TWENTY-TWO DID ANYTHING happen to alter the quiet course of his life at home. By then he was a fine-looking, broad-shouldered young man of nearly six feet, wit sensitive hands, the striking square-cut forehead which one sometimes sees among the Welsh, and above all, remarkable eyes, crystal clear and penetrating, the eyes of a seer. Beneath the quiet surface, however, one strong tide was running—ambition. He wanted to see the world, he wanted to make money, and America became the loadstone. Several young men from the village had gone to the U.S.A. and were sending back glowing reports of the money they were making, earning in one day what it would take a week to get in South Wales. When Rees heard this, nothing could hold him back, not even the pull of home. He “weighed the losses and gains, and America won every time.” His brothers were studying for careers, but he decided “to make money and retire early in life”! He had a cousin, Evan Lewis, who had emigrated and taken work at New Castle, in the steel area round Pittsburgh, and Rees took ship and joined him, getting employment in a tin mill.

Before he left Brynamman, however, a word from God came to him, which he called the greatest blessing he received before his conversion. One Sunday night, a month before he sailed, he came late to church, and as it was crowded out, he stood in the vestibule. The minis-

ter was reading Hebrews 12 : 1. "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses . . ." "These witnesses," he said, "are the men of faith mentioned in the previous chapter and we ought to realize they are around us; we know they are real, because Moses and Elijah spoke to the Saviour on the Mount of Transfiguration, and the disciples saw them." The minister then said straight out, just as if he knew Rees was listening, "Young man, you may be leaving home, you may be going to a place where your parents will not see you; but remember, the cloud of witnesses and God will see you." The words struck home to Rees. They were new to him and the effect was "an impression from the other world" coming over him. "I saw the Mount of Hebrews 12 : 22," he said, "the city of the living God, the general assembly and church of the first-born," and he saw them, not as spies, but there to encourage and strengthen him. It was God's overshadowing Hand again, putting an external restraint on His chosen vessel, until He revealed His Son to him; for till that day came, this cloud of witnesses remained "the greatest reality" of his life.

When he left his homeland Rees continued to live the same religious life in America, where he became a member of a church and never missed a prayer meeting. Only once did he nearly yield to the temptation of worldly amusements, when a friend invited him to go to a big boxing match. Doubtless his former interest in boxing was the attraction. But the Restraining Hand was upon him. The day before the match, the thought came to him, "If your father or uncle were here, would you go? And what about the cloud of witnesses?" He told his friend he wouldn't accompany him that night for a fortune!

Living an upright life like that, how could God bring

him to the realization that he was born in sin and needed to be saved? Even the minister of his church thought he was "the best young man in the congregation"—an indication that the minister himself must have needed what Rees needed! His case was not unlike Paul's, "As touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless"; and until there is a conviction of need, there can never be a desire for a change. But God has His ways.

The first mark that God made on him was through his cousin, Evan Lewis. He gave Rees a sudden shock one night by asking him if he was "born again". Rees had never heard the expression. He was "as ignorant of it as Nicodemus". But he knew he was wounded and raised his defences: "What do you mean? My life is as good as yours." "That's not the point. Put it this way: Do you know you are saved?" "I am a Christian, and that's good enough for me." But though he professed to be unconvinced, his complacency was shaken. His cousin was faithful and did not let the matter drop, although it always seemed to end in fruitless argument. But one day the arrow really found its mark. His cousin told him that when his sister was dying she had spoken to him about his own need of the Saviour, and as she spoke, he had "seen Calvary". Again Rees did not know what he meant, but instinctively felt he was on holy ground, and a voice seemed to warn him not to argue any more. The impression was so strong that he decided to leave the place and seek work elsewhere, lest he should "touch the forbidden thing".

He moved about a hundred miles to Martin's Ferry, but as his cousin saw him off at the station, even his last words drove the shaft farther home: "If only you were born again I wouldn't mind your leaving, but it troubles me to see you going when you are not right with God." Rees could not forget these words. The gracious Hound

of Heaven was on his trail "with unhurrying chase, And unperturbèd pace", with "those strong feet that followed, followed after".

The light really began to dawn as he was reading one day an outstanding book of that time, Professor Henry Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*. Drummond was telling how he had never thought it possible to give a definition of life, till he found one in the works of Herbert Spencer, who said that life is correspondence with environment. A child is born with five senses and various bodily organs, and each corresponds with something in his environment; the eye sees sights, the ear hears sounds, the lungs breathe air, and so on. "While I can correspond with my environment, I have life," said Spencer; "but if something happened to me which prevented me from corresponding with my environment then I should be dead; death is failure of correspondence." Drummond took the definition back to Adam. The Lord had told him that the day he disobeyed, he would surely die. Did he die? On Spencer's definition he died spiritually, for though he continued to have a natural life, he lost his correspondence with God and could only come back to Him by the way of sacrifice, the way of a victim killed in his stead.

On reading this, the first thought that came to Rees was, Had he correspondence with God? Could he say the Saviour was as real to him as his mother? Did he know God as a daily Presence in his life, or did he only think of Him in the prayer meetings? If he died, had he another environment with which to correspond? He was a part of his parents, distance didn't interfere with their fellowship, but he hadn't a relationship with God like that, and back came those words to him which his cousin had constantly been quoting: "Except a man be born again . . . he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

## TWO SHOCKS

"I saw it!" said Rees. "I believed in the Saviour, but one thing I knew, I wasn't *born* of Him. So far as having correspondence with the spiritual realm where the Saviour lived, I was a dead man, I was outside the Kingdom, which all my good life and religion had never enabled me to enter; I was outside, though I was not a drunkard or a thief,—because I had no correspondence with God."

His religious complacency was shattered. There was no great conviction of sin, but he knew there was a gulf between him and God, and a deeper concern for his eternal destiny than for any of the affairs of this life possessed his mind.

## *Chapter Three*

### MEETING THE RISEN LORD

"NIGH AND NIGH DRAWS THE CHASE." WHAT REES had begun to meditate upon in theory, he soon had to face in fact. He was suddenly struck down with typhoid fever, always dangerous, but in those days often fatal, and soon he was face to face with death. In this bitter experience he was alone in lodgings and far from home, and this again was the finger of God, for, he said later, "I found fear in me for the first time, and when I faced leaving this world and entering an unknown realm, pangs took hold of me, such as I had never felt before. Thank God my parents were not there to take that fear from me. Thank God that human sympathy did not blind me to eternity, for you may live in a crowd, but you meet God and face eternity alone."

He cried to the Lord not to allow him to die. The enjoyment he had had in money-making, travelling and sight-seeing was forgotten as he besought the Lord to give him eternal life. "Give me one more chance," he cried, "and I will give my life to You." There was a vow in that cry. The Lord saw to that before He answered, and even as the cry went up, Rees knew in his heart that he was not to die. From that moment he began to recover, but he was a changed man. "As I faced losing all and entering an eternal darkness, I touched real life for the first time," he said. "I had seen the world at its very best taking me down to a lost eternity, and I knew I owed my all to the God who had delivered me." From that time on, he never regarded

## MEETING THE RISEN LORD

eternity lightly, for he had faced the reality of hell—a separation from God for ever.

As he recovered, the gravity of his recent experience made him examine his position with renewed earnestness. He had been delivered from death, but not from the fear of death. He had always believed in the incarnation, the atonement, the resurrection; they were the most precious truths in his life. Why then were they not real to him? If Christ had conquered death, why was he afraid of it? Those who have heard him tell of this period in his life will never forget how he rang out the answer to these questions: "I found that I had only an historical Christ and not a personal Saviour who could take me to the other side."

For five months he searched daily for the way to God. He said he would gladly have spent every penny, and gone from one end of that vast country to the other, if he could only find a man to show him the way to eternal life. He did go to the only one he could think of. He took the 100-mile journey back to New Castle to ask his cousin about it, but though his cousin knew the way himself, he seemed unable to make it clear to Rees.

During these months he made another move, to Connellsville, Pennsylvania. Here at last "the chase" was to end. "Halts by me that footfall: Is my gloom, after all, Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?" How wonderfully each restless move had only been one further stage forward in the pursuit and capture of the prey. Rees had not been long in his new home, when he heard that a converted Jew, Maurice Reuben from Pittsburgh, had come to the city for a mission. The first night that he went to hear him, Reuben told the story of his conversion and how the Holy Spirit had revealed Calvary to him. "I had heard preaching on Calvary scores of times before and believed it," said Rees, "but

I had never seen Calvary before that night." He was being brought back to the very same point which had so struck him in his cousin's testimony.

Maurice Reuben told how he belonged to a wealthy family and had the best the world could give him, and how he had lived to make money. He was a director of Solomon and Reuben, one of the largest stores of Pittsburgh. But the life of one of his buyers used to put him under deep conviction, until one day he said to him, "You must have been born happy." "Yes," replied the buyer, "in my second birth. I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ and was born of God. In my first birth I was no happier than you!"

Reuben was so moved by this testimony that he bought a New Testament, and there he was impressed with the fact that all those who followed Jesus were Jews: John the Baptist pointing to Him as the Lamb of God; Peter, James and John, the chief disciples; and to a Jew the Saviour had said, "On this rock will I build My Church." Then he came to the story of the rich young ruler. It was a dramatic moment—a rich Jew of the twentieth century and under conviction, reading of the Saviour's dealings with a rich Jew of the first century! The way that Reuben saw it was that if Jesus had told that young man to sell all to inherit eternal life, how could he, Reuben, inherit the same gift, unless on the same condition? It was his supreme test. If he became a disciple, he knew that he too stood to lose all. But it was too late to go back; he had seen it, and he must follow; and as Reuben said those words, Rees echoed them in his own heart; it was too late also for him to go back.

Reuben faced it fairly and squarely and counted the cost. His wife might leave him, his brother put him out of the business, and not a single Jew follow him, but he

had made up his mind; if he lost everything, he meant to do it. Then one day, on the way to the store, Reuben heard a voice repeating to him the words of John 14 : 6 : "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me." The truth flashed upon him—he accepted Christ and entered into life that moment. He then told his brother and others. According to his father's will he was to forfeit every penny if he changed his religion, but his brother offered to give him £70,000—his share of the business—if he would cross U.S.A. and retire in Montana. But Reuben replied, "I have had the light in Pittsburgh, and I am going to witness in Pittsburgh."

Late that Saturday night detectives came and took him to the police station. On Monday two doctors visited his cell and asked him about the voice he had heard. "Do they question my sanity?" he thought. Two hours later warders came from the asylum and took him to a room where there were twenty-nine mentally deranged people. The bitterness of his position overcame him. He had victory in the lock-up, but this seemed more than he could bear. He fell on his knees by his bed and poured out his heart to the Lord. He did not know how long he was there, but he seemed to lose himself, and a vision of Calvary appeared to him. He said he witnessed every stage of the crucifixion. He forgot his own sufferings in the sufferings of the Saviour, and as he gazed on the Cross, the Master Himself said to him, "And must I bear the Cross alone, and all the world go free?" From a broken heart Reuben answered, "No. There's a cross for everyone, and there's a cross for me." From that hour he was a new man. Instead of complaining at being in the asylum, he began to pray for the other twenty-nine, and to the Saviour he said, "Let me suffer

for You. Whatever You allow me to go through, I will never complain again."

Two weeks later, Reuben's brother came to see him, and reproached him for his folly in getting himself into such a place. "Why won't you be wise?" he said. "Get out of here and go to Montana." "Does that offer still stand? Then it is not a medical condition but something else that is keeping me here!" said Reuben with all the keenness of his logical mind. Some Christian friends he was in touch with caused inquiries to be set on foot. In six weeks his release was procured. It became a court case, and the test was on the voice. The judge called the doctor and asked why this man had been certified as insane. "Because he heard a voice," said the doctor. "Didn't the Apostle Paul hear a voice?" countered the judge, who was a Christian man. "This is a disgrace to the American flag," and he told Reuben to prosecute everyone who had anything to do with it. "I shall never prosecute one," answered Reuben, "but I will do one thing—I will pray for them." He crossed the court and offered his hand to his brother, but he turned his back on him. He went to his wife, but she did the same. But what a victory he had in his own soul!

He rented a small room in Chicago, where he lived alone with the Lord and won many converts, though for two years he hardly ever had a square meal. A year later his wife came to hear him in a camp meeting and was converted, and for the first time he saw his little boy who had been born after his wife had left him. She was willing to make her home with him again, if only he would earn a living as other Christians did. His heart went out to his little boy, and this test was even greater than the first. Her request seemed so reasonable, but he knew that the Lord had called him from the world into this life of faith. He pleaded with the Lord, but the only

reply he received was, "Back to Egypt!" It was enough, and once more Reuben embraced the Cross. He went to see his wife and child off; it was a costly experience; but as the train steamed out of the station it seemed that God poured the joy of heaven into his soul. He literally danced on the platform. He did not see his wife for another three years. Then, in another camp meeting, she too had a revelation of the Cross, as a result of which she testified, that whereas before as a believer she had not been willing to share the sacrificial life of her husband, if it would be for God's glory, she would now be willing to beg her bread from door to door. They were reunited and she became a wonderful co-worker with him in his ministry.

One thing that had hindered Rees Howells from coming through before was that while people said they were born again, he could not see that their lives were better than his. How then could he be convinced that they had something he had not? But he had sometimes said to the Lord, "If I ever see a person who is living the Sermon on the Mount, I will give in." Before Reuben came to the end of his story, the Lord said to Rees, "Is this your man?"

What followed in that little Methodist Chapel Rees Howells tells in his own words: "As Maurice Reuben brought those sacred scenes before us, I too saw the Cross. It seemed as if I spent ages at the Saviour's feet, and I wept and wept. I felt as if He had died just for me. I lost myself. I had been living in the fear of death, and I saw Him taking that death for me. My parents loved me very much, and up to that time, to me there were no people like them, but they never suffered death for me. He *did* it. His love for me, as compared with theirs, was as high as the heavens above the earth, and He won my love—every bit of it. He broke me, and

everything in me went right out to Him.

"Then He spoke to me, and said, 'Behold I stand at the door and knock. May I come in to you, as I came in to Reuben and took the place of wife and son and home and store and world? Will you accept me?' 'Yes,' I replied, and He came in, and that moment I changed. I was born into another world. I found myself in the Kingdom of God, and the Creator became my Father. That night I received the gift of eternal life, that gift which money cannot buy.

"When I went home, my friend who had accompanied me to the meeting, but had seen nothing in it, seemed so rough to me. Everyone who was not born again seemed rough. The Saviour became everything to me. He was not only the fairest among ten thousand, but fairest among millions! That love of His had always been there, but before I saw it, there was no response from me; but He had plenty of response after this. Everything of this world was rough, but everything about Him, so holy, pure and beautiful. I changed altogether. None of my old friends could understand what had happened. I had no fellowship with natural things. It wasn't a point of doctrine I saw; no, it was Calvary. It wasn't giving a mental assent; no, the veil was taken back, my eyes were opened, and I *saw* Him. That night I saw this world as a cursed place, and the thought came to me that I would never touch it again.

"The love of the Saviour was revealed to me. You can't explain what a revelation is. I saw that the Saviour and Father, before I should suffer, would rather suffer for me. No natural love is in the same world as His love. It was not merely that the Saviour helped me outside Himself; no, He took my place. I saw every other love so rough in comparison. Self was the motive of it. But I could see that love enduring through the

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countless ages of eternity. When you receive the Saviour, you receive the love of God. That love flooded my being, and it has flooded my being ever since. I saw that by His coming in to me, He would love sinners through me, as He loved me. It would not be forcing myself to love others, any more than the Saviour forced Himself to love me. No person could be an enemy to me, because I had been an enemy to Him before I was reconciled. If I live in the realm where He is, I live to have mercy, and to be kind, to love others. Could the love of God in me do harm to anyone? I had left the world and its folly, and been born into that Kingdom where there is only the love of God—the most attractive life on the face of the earth.”

Rees always spoke of this, his spiritual birthday, as the most outstanding day of his life. It was the day which brought his stay in America to a close. He never forgot that it was in the U.S.A. and through a Jew that he found the Saviour, and that he owed a debt to God's chosen people which he was to repay in later years; but he felt that his first witness should be to his own folk, who had nurtured him in the things of God. The thought of returning home was crystallized for him within a few days by a sharp temptation on the point of his previous weakness—the love of money. The manager of the works where he was employed had a high opinion of him, and offered him a job at £2 10s. a day, a good wage even for America in those days, but it would have meant more claim on his time. He told his friend that he was leaving as soon as he could, “because the manager is putting a temptation before me, and I told the Lord I would never live for money.” The new life was quickly pushing out the old. As he said, he had gone out to do sight-seeing, but had seen the greatest sight in the world—Calvary!

## *Chapter Four*

### THE WELSH REVIVAL

**R**EES'S RETURN TO WALES WAS IN A STRATEGIC YEAR. It was in 1904, the time of the great Revival, and his own recent experience just fitted him to take part in it. "In a short while the whole of the country was aflame," he said. "Every church was stirred to its depths. Strong men were in tears of penitence, and women moved with a new fervour. People were overpowered by the Spirit as on the day of Pentecost, and were counted as drunken men. In the services they were praying, singing and testifying. It was a church revival, turning Christians everywhere into witnesses: 'Certainly we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard.'"

The presence and power of the Holy Ghost in the church has always been a fact recognized by true believers; so it was not so much a case of asking Him to come, as acknowledging His presence, and very soon realizing His power: but often they had first to pray out the hindrances to blessing; disobedience and unforgiving hearts were two sins that were constantly dealt with. On the other hand, obedience to the promptings of the Spirit and open confession of Christ brought down the blessing. Once the first hymn was given out, the meeting conducted itself. There was no leader, but people felt an unseen control. Speakers were often interrupted by a chorus of song and prayer, but there was no sense of dis-

cord or break in the harmony. There was noise, excitement and emotion in the meetings, but it was only the effect of people being freed from bondage. When some complained, one old preacher said he preferred the noise of the city to the silence of the cemetery!

The Revival proved what the Holy Ghost could do through a company of believers, who were of one spirit and of one mind as on the day of Pentecost. We had seen over and over again what the Lord could do through a yielded evangelist or pastor, such as Moody or Finney, but in the Welsh revival it was a divine power manifested through the church. The keynote was, "Bend the church and save the world." The one aim was the saving of souls. The Saviour said there is joy among the angels over one sinner that repents, and they could say there was joy in the church over the converts. The bells of heaven rang every time, and there was a shout of victory in the camp.

Under the influence of the Spirit there was an irresistible power. The feeblest ones were often clothed with a majesty that was indescribable, and their words were with unction, as they showed how the Saviour was "slain for our offences and raised again for our justification." Whole congregations were melted, and people were crying out in agony of soul, "What must we do to be saved?" Multitudes experienced the power of the Blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse from all sin.

But the real problem arose as the Revival proceeded and thousands were added to the churches. There were more children born than there were nurses to tend them. The establishing of the converts became the greatest need, which if not met would be the most dangerous weakness of the Revival. As enthusiasm abated, there were bound to be many who had depended more on feelings, and not yet learned to have their faith solidly

based on the word of God. The devil took advantage of this, some became cold and indifferent, and the spiritual conflict began. Those like Rees Howells, young in the Spirit though they were, but at least a bit more advanced than the converts in the Revival, were needed to be intercessors and teachers, to take the burden of the new-born babes, and pray and lead them on. But these young intercessors soon began to find how mighty is the enemy of souls, and that a conflict, not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers of the darkness of this world, cannot be fought with carnal weapons. They needed what they themselves had not yet received, the enduement of the Holy Ghost for service. As Rees Howells said later: "The intercession of the Holy Ghost for the saints in this present evil world must be made through believers filled with the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 8 : 26, 27).

It was this that brought him and others to feel their need of the fullness. Nothing had been lacking in the joy and satisfaction which Rees had found in the Saviour for his own personal life, but he did not know the secret of power for service. "Many blamed the young converts for backsliding," he said, "but we blamed ourselves, because we were not in a position to pray them through to victory. Oh, the tragedy, to be helpless in front of the enemy, when he was sifting young converts like wheat! In Isaiah 59 we read that God saw there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor, and this was just our case. Many of us felt the need of being 'endued with power from on High'. We were in the same position as those disciples, whom the Lord told to tarry until they were endued. The record goes on to say that 'they worshipped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy'. They had the joy before they had the power, so that joy was no

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proof of that enduement of the Spirit. We had that same joy in the Revival, in the knowledge of a risen Christ and the assurance of eternal life—unspeakable joy—but at the same time we felt the lack of power for service.”

## *Chapter Five*

### THE HOLY GHOST TAKES POSSESSION

ON HIS RETURN FROM AMERICA, REES HAD SETTLED down again in the old family home, where he had received a great welcome. Instead of returning to the tin mill, however, like several of his brothers, he now found employment in a neighbouring mine, about a mile away in the valley, working underground at the coal-face—the hardest job of all.

His spare time was spent in the activities of the Revival, but the sense of spiritual need was growing among the workers, and in 1906 a large party decided to spend their summer holiday-week seeking the Lord in a special way at the Llandrindod Wells Convention, the counterpart in Wales of the English Keswick Convention for the deepening of spiritual life. For Rees Howells this was to be, after his new birth, the most revolutionary event in his life.

Shortly before they were due to go, Rees was in a meeting in Brynamman, where a young woman read Romans 8: 26–30. She could only read very slowly, which gave time for each word to sink in: “Predestinated... justified... glorified.” As Rees listened, he said to himself, “I know I am predestinated according to the foreknowledge of God, and justified—but am I glorified?” That puzzled him and the question was constantly in his mind: What does it mean to be glorified?

Two days later, in the train on the way to Llandrindod, with this thought still before him, a voice spoke to

him: "When you return, you will be a new man." "But I am a new man," he protested. "No," came the answer, "you are a child." The others in the carriage were singing the newest song of the Revival, *The Glory Song*, but Rees never heard it; he kept pacing the corridor with that voice ringing in his ears: "You will be a new man."

On the first morning of the Convention the preacher who was perhaps the greatest expositor on the life in the Spirit that Keswick has produced, the Rev. Evan Hopkins, spoke on Ephesians 2:1-6: "You hath He quickened . . . and hath raised us up . . . and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." He pointed out that it was the Risen Lord who had appeared to the disciples after the resurrection; but when the Holy Ghost came down He revealed the exalted Saviour at the right hand of the Father. Mr. Hopkins then asked the question, "Have you been quickened by Christ? Have you been raised up to sit with Him in heavenly places?" In his heart Rees answered, "Yes, I know I have been quickened, but I have not been raised up with Christ to that place of power," and the moment he said that, he saw the Glorified Lord. "As really as I had seen the Crucified Christ and the Risen Christ, I saw the Glorified Christ, and the voice I had heard in the train said to me, 'Would you like to sit there with Him? There is a place for you,' and I saw myself raised up with Him. I knew now what it meant to be 'glorified'. I saw Him as John did in Patmos, and I was dazzled like the Apostle Paul. When He reveals a thing, it is exactly as it is, it is not imagination. All that night I was in the presence of God and my glorified Saviour. There is nothing in nature refined enough to describe it. I saw men as trees walking."

The next morning Mr. Hopkins spoke about the Holy Spirit. He made it plain that He is a Person, with all

the faculties of a Person, exactly like the Saviour. He has intelligence, love and a will of His own; and as a Person, before He comes to live in a man, He must be given full possession of his body. "As he spoke," Rees said, "the Holy Ghost appeared to me and I knew Him to be the One who had spoken to me the day before and shown me that place of splendour and glory into which natural eyes can never look. It never dawned on me before that the Holy Ghost was a Person exactly like the Saviour, and that He must come and dwell in flesh and blood. In fact, the Church knows more about the Saviour, who was only on the earth thirty-three years, than about the Holy Ghost who has been here two thousand years. I had only thought of Him as an Influence coming on meetings, and that was what most of us in the Revival thought. I had never seen that He must live in bodies, as the Saviour lived in His on earth."

The meeting with the Holy Ghost was just as real to Rees Howells as his meeting with the Saviour those years before. "I saw Him as a Person apart from flesh and blood, and He said to me, 'As the Saviour had a body, so I dwell in the cleansed temple of the believer. I am a Person. I am God, and I am come to ask you to give your body to Me that I may work through it. I need a body for My temple (1 Cor. 6 : 19), but it must belong to Me without reserve, for two persons with different wills can never live in the same body. Will you give Me yours? (Rom. 12 : 1). But if I come in, I come as God, and you must go out (Col. 3 : 2, 3). I shall not mix Myself with your self.'

"He made it very plain that He would never share my life. I saw the honour He gave me in offering to indwell me, but there were many things very dear to me, and I knew He wouldn't keep one of them. The change

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He would make was very clear. It meant every bit of my fallen nature was to go to the Cross, and He would bring in His own life and His own nature."

It was unconditional surrender. From the meeting Rees went out into a field, where he cried his heart out, because, as he said, "I had received a sentence of death, as really as a prisoner in the dock. I had lived in my body for twenty-six years, and could I easily give it up? Who could give his life up to another person in an hour? Why does a man struggle when death comes, if it is easy to die? I knew that the only place fit for the old nature was on the cross. Paul makes that very plain in Romans 6. But once this is done in reality, it is done for ever. I could not run into this. I intended to do it, but oh, the cost! I wept for days. I lost seven pounds in weight, just because I saw what He was offering me. How I wished I had never seen it! One thing He reminded me of was that He had only come to take what I had already promised the Saviour, not in part, but the whole. Since He died for me, I had died in Him, and I knew that the new life was His and not mine. That had been clear in my mind for three years; so He had only come to take what was his own: and I saw that only the Holy Ghost in me could live like the Saviour. Everything He told me appealed to me; it was only a question of the loss there would be in doing it. I didn't give my answer in a moment, and He didn't want me to."

It took five days to make the decision, days which were spent alone with God. "Like Isaiah, I saw the holiness of God," he said, "and seeing Him, I saw my own corrupt nature. It wasn't sins that I saw, but nature touched by the Fall. I was corrupt to the core. I knew I had to be cleansed; I saw there was as much difference between the Holy Ghost and myself as between light and darkness."

"Nothing is more real to me than the process I went through for that whole week," he continued. "The Holy Spirit went on dealing with me, exposing the root of my nature which was self, and you can only get out of a thing what is in its root. Sin was cancelled, and it wasn't sin He was dealing with; it was self—that thing which came from the Fall. He was not going to take any superficial surrender. He put His finger on each part of my self-life, and I had to decide in cold blood. He could never take a thing away until I gave my consent. Then the moment I gave it, some purging took place (Isaiah 6 : 5-7), and I could never touch that thing again. It was not *saying* I was purged and the thing still having a hold on me: no, it was a breaking, and the Holy Ghost taking control. Day by day the dealing went on. He was coming in as God, and I had lived as man, and 'what is permissible to an ordinary man,' He told me, 'will not be permissible to you.' "

This "Llandrindod experience" was the crisis, which was followed by the process of sanctification (see Mr. Howells's own comment on p. 100) during which the Holy Spirit, on the basis of his initial surrender, step by step replaced the self-nature with His own divine nature (2 Peter 1 : 4). First there was the love of money, that "root of evil" which had formerly taken Rees to America. The Lord told him that He would take out of his nature all taste for money, and any ambition for the ownership of money. "I had to consider what that meant," Rees said. "Money would be no more to me than it was to John the Baptist or to the Saviour. To an extent this was dealt with in my new birth, but now the Holy Ghost was getting at the root." The dealings on that lasted a whole day, and by the evening his "attitude towards money had entirely changed."

Then there was the fact that he would never have the

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right to a choice in making a home. "I saw I could never give my life to another person to live to that one alone. Could the Saviour have given His life and attention to one person, instead of to a lost world? Neither could the Holy Ghost. He took plenty of time to show me exactly what it would mean: the life He would live would be for the world. Was I willing for that?"

Other things that were dealt with included ambition. How could he have any if the Holy Ghost came in? The way the Lord showed it to him was like this: Supposing he had a mission in a town, and another mission opened in the same place; if there was jealousy between the two, and it was better for the town only to have one, then it would be his which would have to go. Or suppose that he and another man should apply for the same job, he would have to let the other have it. Or if he were earning 12s. a day, and another man with a family was earning much less, the Spirit could tell him to give his job to that man. He saw the Holy Ghost in ways like that taking the place of the other, and suffering instead of him. Yes, he was willing for that.

On the fifth day his reputation was touched. As he was thinking of men of the Bible who were full of the Holy Ghost, and particularly John the Baptist, the Lord said to him, "Then I may live through you the kind of life I lived through him." A Nazarite clothed in camel's hair, living in a desert! Even in this, or what might be its modern equivalent, a real decision had to be made. "If I live My life in you, and that is the kind of life I choose, you can't stop Me," was the Lord's word on it. As the Saviour was despised, he must be willing to be the same.

By Friday night each point had been faced. He knew exactly what he was offered, the choice between temporal and eternal gain. The Spirit summed the issue up

for him: "On no account will I allow you to cherish a single thought of self, and the life I will live in you will be one hundred per cent for others. You will never be able to save yourself, any more than the Saviour could when He was on earth. Now, are you willing?" He was to give a final answer.

That night a friend said to him, "If some of us come over after the meeting, will you tell us of your position in Christ?" At once the Spirit challenged him: "How can you do that? You have seen the position of the over-comers, but you have not yet entered it. I have been dealing with you for five days; you must give Me your decision by six o'clock to-night, and remember, your will must go. On no account will I allow you to bring in a cross-current. Where I send you, you will go; what I say to you, you will do." It was the final battle on the will.

"I asked Him for more time," Rees continued, "but He said, 'You will not have a minute after six o'clock.' When I heard that it was exactly as if a wild beast was roused in me. 'You gave me a free will,' I answered, 'and now You force me to give it up.' 'I do not force you,' He replied, 'but for three years have you not been saying that you are not your own, and that you wanted to give your life back to the Saviour as completely as He gave His for you?' I climbed down in a second. The way I had said it was an insult to the Trinity. 'I am sorry,' I told Him, 'I didn't mean what I said.' 'You are not forced to give up your will,' He said again, 'but at six o'clock I will take your decision. After that you will never get another chance.' It was my last offer, my last chance! I saw that Throne (Rev. 3 : 21), and all my future for eternity going. I said, 'Please forgive me, I want to do it.'

"Once more the question came, 'Are you willing?'

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It was ten minutes to six. I wanted to do it, but I could not. Your mind is keen when you are tested, and in a flash it came to me, 'How can self be willing to give up self?' Five to six came. I was afraid of those last five minutes. I could count the ticks of the clock. Then the Spirit spoke again. 'If you can't be willing, would you like Me to help you? Are you willing to be made willing?' 'Take care,' the enemy whispered. 'When a stronger person than yourself is on the other side, to be willing to be made willing, is just the same as to be willing.' As I was thinking upon that point I looked at the clock. It was one minute to six. I bowed my head and said, 'Lord, I am willing.'"

Within an hour the Third Person of the Godhead had come in. He gave him that word in Heb. 10 : 19, "Having therefore boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus," and "Immediately," said Rees, "I was transported into another realm, within that sacred veil, where the Father, the Saviour and the Holy Ghost live. There I heard God speaking to me, and I have lived there ever since. When the Holy Ghost enters, He comes in to 'abide for ever.' To the Blood be the glory!

"How I adored the grace of God! It is God who goes so far as to give us repentance. It was God who helped me to give up my will. There were some things He had asked for during the week that I was able to give, because I was the master of them, but when He asked me to give up my self and my will, I found I could not—until he pulled me through."

An eyewitness tells us that no words can describe the little meeting in the house that night; the glory of God came down. Rees started the chorus: "There's power in the Blood," and they couldn't stop singing for two hours; then from 9 p.m. to 2.30 a.m. it was "nothing but the

Holy Ghost speaking things I had never dreamed of, and exalting the Saviour."

When he woke next morning, he said, "I realized that the Holy Ghost had come in to 'abide for ever.' The feeling I had was that 'He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me' was love.' It is impossible to describe the floods of joy that followed."

Rees Howells was not a person who was given to public speaking, he was naturally quiet and retiring; but when the Holy Ghost entered, He loosed his tongue, and brought His own boldness in. There was a praise meeting that morning in the Convention Tent, with about a thousand present, including some two hundred ministers: The first person Rees saw there was his own minister, and if anything could have stopped him speaking, it was the fact of his presence. But during the meeting, he stood up and told them clearly and calmly that he was calling them all to be witnesses that the same Holy Ghost who had entered the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, had entered him, and would produce similar results. The effect was so great that during the next week, when crowds had gathered to hear messages from a famous speaker, literally hundreds came to ask Rees how the Holy Ghost had entered him. It was the first stream of those promised rivers which, as Jesus said, flow out of those in whom the Spirit dwells.

## *Chapter Six*

### LOVING AN OUTCAST

**W**HEN THE DIVINE OWNER TAKES POSSESSION OF A property, He has a twofold objective: intense cultivation and abounding fruitfulness. But if the land is fallow ground, He can only till it acre by acre. We shall see the Owner now at work in His newly claimed estate.

The first acre He put under fresh cultivation in Rees Howells was the prayer life. Rees had been used to praying general prayers, but if someone had asked him if he knew he was going to get an answer, he would not have known what to say. Now the Spirit told him, "the meaning of prayer is answer and of all that I give you, see that you lose nothing." He also told him that effectual praying must be guided praying, and that he was no longer to pray for all kinds of things at his own whim or fancy, but only the prayers that the Holy Ghost gave him.

Coupled with this was another important lesson, that he was never again to ask God to answer a prayer through others, if He could answer it through him. That included his money. When there was a prayer for money, he must allow his own to be used. The Holy Ghost showed him that in the unsundered state he could spend time in asking God to supply the foreign fields and other causes, and yet not be willing for God to answer the prayer through him; and that often the Lord is "wearied with our words." All this unreality was

to be put on one side, and the Scriptures acted on in the most practical sense.

The first prayer of this kind that the Holy Ghost prayed through him was for a young man named Will Battery. He had come to the district some years before to live with his uncle, after having had meningitis which had left him in a very weak condition; in this state liquor had got a hold on him, and he had gone from bad to worse. He hadn't slept in a bed for two years, but spent his nights on the boilers of the tin mill. He was dirty and unshaven; he wore no socks and never tied his shoe laces. The Revival had been in the district and hundreds had been converted, but no one had reached him. It was for this man that Mr. Howells, to his own surprise found the Holy Ghost travelling in Him. He was to pray him through to sanity and salvation, and love him "not in word neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth". "It wouldn't have come to my mind to love him," he said, "but when the Holy Ghost comes in, He brings in the love of the Saviour. It seemed as if I could lay down my life for this man; there was a love pouring out of me that I never knew before. Naturally speaking, he would be the last one with whom I would spend my spare time, and the tin mill would be the last place."

In his free hours he made this man his friend, and spent all his Sundays with him. He had more joy, he said, seeking to win this one, than at chapel in the company of the other believers. He even walked about the village with him, although embarrassed once or twice as people turned and stared at them, but "the Lord pulled me up on it," he said.

About ten days before Christmas, the Spirit asked Rees what gift he would like, as this was the first Christmas since He had come into his life. The choice Rees made was obvious: that Will Battery should have a

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blessing. But from that day on Battery disappeared! "I sought him for ten evenings," Rees said, "as a mother looks for her child. I didn't yet know the ways of the Holy Ghost, and that He wanted me to trust Him." Then the day before Christmas Battery came to look for him. "I can hear his footsteps now," said Rees, "and oh, the sensation of it! I hadn't the faintest idea of the love of the Holy Ghost for a lost soul, until He loved one through me. What an evening we had together! The next day I had the joy of spending my first Christmas after the Holy Ghost had come in, in the tin mill with this young man, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. My mother gave me a basket with Christmas dinner for the two of us; but my joy was too great to eat. Battery had the lot! At 4 p.m. he asked if he could come with me to the cottage meeting. What joy I had in walking with him there! I had never asked him to go myself, for fear of embarrassing him."

But the work was not done in a few weeks or months. Stage by stage he was lifted, until Rees was able to put him in lodgings and get him to take a job in the mine. But even then there were lapses, such as when Rees was summoned to face an angry landlady. Will Battery had gone to bed with his pit clothes on—boots included! He hastily told her to send the sheets to the laundry at his expense! The day came when the chapel people were amazed to see Battery sitting in the meetings respectably dressed; but it took three years for the final victory, when at last Mr. Howells was able to persuade him to go home to his mother, who was a converted woman and had prayed for him for years. "In this way," said Mr. Howells, "I started at the bottom and loved just one; and if you love one, you can love many; and if many, you can love all."

The second outstanding prayer the Holy Ghost prayed

through him was for a man who went by the name of Jim Stakes, his real name being James Thomas. It was also the means by which the Holy Spirit gave Rees Howells his first lesson in "princely giving". As he said later; "Since my money now belongs to the New Tenant, the old tenant has to be impartial about the amount He gives. The new Tenant by His nature is more generous than the old one; the latter has lived so long in Egypt and later in the wilderness under the law, that he has only been used at best to giving the tithe; so when the new Tenant wants to give princely gifts, He first tests the reality of the surrender; if it is proved genuine, then there will be no future conflicts when large amounts are called for." The test for Rees was on Jim Stakes.

This man had been such a low character that the common saying was: What Jim Stakes would not do, the devil himself could not do! He was one of the worst drunkards, and there was a great sensation during the Revival when he went under conviction and came out for salvation in a prayer meeting. He had a household of children, and through his old drinking habit was in great poverty. Rees Howells had only met him once, but knew him well by repute. One morning when in prayer, quite unexpectedly, this man "stood before" him. "I had never before known such a conflict for a soul in the spiritual realm," Rees said. "For an hour it was as much as I could do to allow the Holy Ghost to pray through me. I saw the devil attacking him, and that if he could get him back, it would be one of the best things he could do to counteract the work of the Revival. I saw that it was a conflict between God and the devil for a soul, and I told the Lord I would do anything, if He would keep him."

That very evening there was a man at the door to see him. He never had a greater surprise. It was Jim

Stakes! He had come a distance of two miles, because he said that while he was working in the mine that morning, at ten o'clock Rees Howells had "stood before" him. It was at that very hour in the morning that Jim Stakes had "stood before" Rees, and the burden of prayer had come on him! "Are you in trouble?" Rees asked him. He was indeed. He was two years behind in his rent, and that morning the bailiffs had marked his furniture and were coming to fetch it. Two years' rent! That was a lot of money. After a moment's hesitation Mr. Howells said, "I'll give you one year's rent—and I have a friend who, I believe, will give you the other half." He went upstairs to fetch the money, but before he reached the top, the Holy Spirit spoke to him. "Didn't you tell Me this morning that you would give *all* you had to save him? Why are you only giving him half? Did not the Saviour pay *all* your debt and set you free?" Rees Howells turned and ran down the stairs, and said to the man, "I'm sorry I told you I would only give one year's rent. I am to give you two years' rent, and all you need beside. I am to deliver you in such a way that the devil can't use this situation any longer to get at you." "The moment I said that," Mr. Howells declared later, "the joy of heaven came down. It was as if something snapped in my nature, and it became more blessed to give than to receive." The amount of the gift was £70.

Mr. Howells took him straight over that evening to see a friend, and have prayer together; and on the way he asked him if his wife was converted. Hadn't she seen a change in him and wasn't she glad? "Yes," Jim replied, "but she is not saved; she hasn't had the clothes to go to meetings." As he listened Rees Howells said he felt in the Spirit as though virtue had gone out to her, and he knew that she too would be converted. The fol-

lowing Sunday he went to their house and found her under conviction. The "princely gift" had broken her down, love had conquered, and the Holy Spirit led her to the foot of the Cross, where she saw that a still greater debt had been paid for her, and paid with a greater price—the precious blood of Christ.

The blessing of this couple was what Rees called "the beginning of days" in the district, because cottage meetings were started in their home every Saturday and Sunday evening, led by Rees Howells and his friends. Many came to them, and some of the worst characters gave their hearts to the Lord.

In this new experience of life in the Holy Ghost, Rees had one whose fellowship meant much to him—his Uncle Dick. When he returned from Llandrindod, not all believers by any means could see the need of this total surrender to the Holy Spirit, and some even opposed; but God gave him one of like mind and heart in his uncle. Of all the believers in the district it might have been thought that Uncle Dick had least need of this full surrender. For twenty-six years he had been an invalid, not able to walk more than a few yards, nor to read to himself more than a few minutes at a time. He had accepted this condition as the will of God, and spent hours daily in prayer, or in having the Bible read to him by members of the family. Before the Revival, when the spiritual state in the country had been so low, he had joined with many in praying for a quickening, and had greatly rejoiced when the answer came.

Yet he also knew his own need. Before the Revival, even among the most godly in the churches, few had known of eternal life as a free gift, or of assurance of forgiveness of sins; and even after the Revival, the truth of the Holy Spirit as a divine Person living in the believer's body was hidden from most, including Uncle

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Dick. He had a longing for more power in prayer, and had never known how to get it.

He rejoiced in Rees's conversion, and Rees had continued to look up to his uncle as his most valued spiritual guide, and naturally he would be the first to whom Rees would go on his return from Llandrindod to tell of his new experience. But the visit was not an easy one, because the Lord had revealed to Rees that he was to offer the Holy Spirit to his uncle, and where the younger had been accustomed to be blessed through the elder, the reverse was now to be the case.

But Uncle Dick was ready. As Rees told him of the blessing and price—a complete surrender of the will with no reserve—his uncle recognized it as the Word of the Lord and the truth of the Scriptures. It took him three weeks to settle the matter. Each visit Rees made, his uncle would say, "I am sure I will be through in a few days"; and when he did come through, it was to glorious victory. He was an illustration of the fact that a man may be godly and devoted, and yet still need the Holy Ghost, and find it by no means easy to make a full surrender.

From that time onwards, and for many years, the fellowship in the Spirit between uncle and nephew was very deep. It was a spiritual partnership in which Uncle Dick became Rees's chief prayer partner. He continued his prayer-work for some eight hours a day, but with this difference: up to the time when the Holy Ghost took full possession, any need that arose automatically became a subject of prayer; but from henceforward, as with Rees, it was guided praying with specific objectives, victorious travail and definite answers.

## *Chapter Seven*

### A VILLAGE UNTOUCHED BY THE REVIVAL

**A**BOUT HALF A MILE FROM JIM STAKES'S HOME, THERE was a village without a single Christian, or a single place of worship. At the time of the Revival people had started prayer meetings in it, but they soon fell through. After Jim Stakes and his wife had been blessed, the Lord one day said to Mr. Howells, "As you had such joy in helping these two, wouldn't you like to help a whole village? But in going there, I have another lesson to teach you—you must be the first sufferer." This meant that he must be like a father who is the first to suffer in his family, or a good shepherd who will lay down his life for the sheep.

The Spirit showed him that the Saviour took the sinner's place as Sin-bearer, Sickness-bearer and Burden-bearer, and that in going to the village he was to allow the Spirit to reveal the love of the Saviour through him in a practical way. These people had had the best preaching in the Revival, and it had not touched them; but the Holy Spirit was taking His servant there to be the first sufferer, and everyone who was in need would have a claim on him to supply that need.

So one Sunday morning, Mr. Howells, with his friend Johnny Lewis, Miss Elizabeth Hannah Jones—later to become Mrs. Howells—and other young Christian workers who had joined him, visited the village. Never before had they seen such a sight. Barrels of beer were placed out in the open, and people were drinking and

gambling and playing all kinds of games. The place had been well named Hell-fire Row; but as Mr. Howells said afterwards, "I had only one thought: that the Holy Ghost was going there, and He had authority to cast out devils and forgive sins."

And so it proved in the first home he visited. The woman of the house was unwilling to disclose to her visitors that she was baking on Sunday, so she allowed her bread to get burnt in the oven. When Mr. Howells heard of this, he went back and told her he had come to pay for the damage he had done, and placed a sovereign on her table!

A good deed has wings, and very soon the villagers learned that this band of young people, all workers themselves in pit or shop, were coming with something more than words. The woman opened her cottage for meetings, and she and her husband, who had both been drunkards, were the first converts, the woman particularly continuing as one of the best in the village.

The Spirit made it plain to Mr. Howells that he was to "live out the Bible" to the people. As their clothes were different from his, he was to dress more plainly, so as to attract no attention to himself. He had brought a gold watch back from America, as well as giving one to each of his brothers and sisters, but he was not to wear his again. "If you are the first sufferer, don't have a thing these people can't have," the Lord said to him. Nearly everyone in the village was in need, and the Spirit reminded him of the Sermon on the Mount: "Give to him that asketh thee." "Whoever is in need has a *claim* on you," He said. "You have given Me all you have, and I tell you that it is all for the people, and they have as much right to it as you have."

The greatest break came when the Lord laid hold of the ringleader among the drunkards. For a long time

Mr. Howells prayed for him and asked for a chance to get at him. This man could see the love of God expressed towards others, but he had not yet experienced it himself. The opportunity came. There was some trouble outside the village; this man was involved, and it was to be a court case. The Lord then said to Rees Howells, "Now is your chance. Offer to settle the case for him." So he called at the man's home and asked him, "Would you be relieved if this case could be settled out of court? If the other people are willing to accept compensation, would you like me to pay it for you?" He was speechless. "He was every inch a man," said Mr. Howells. "Mere words could never reach him, but when he saw the love of God like that, he was touched on a vital spot and broke down. He confessed that he had been to blame, and started to come to the meetings, and his love for one could be felt."

It wasn't long before over a dozen were converted, and regular meetings were started, including a Sunday School and a Band of Hope. So many left the public houses and turned to the Lord, that the band of workers felt they must give all their time to be with them. They had five meetings a week, and spent the other evenings visiting in the homes. The work of the Spirit spread far beyond this village, and soon there were converts scattered through all the neighbourhood. There was such power in the ministry that it used to be said, If Rees Howells visits a home, you watch, someone will be converted there!

Mr. Howells was earning his weekly wage at the colliery, and also had some other savings, but at this rate he saw that his money would soon be finished. It was then that the Spirit showed him both a commandment and a promise. To the rich young man the Saviour had given the command, "Sell all that thou hast and distri-

bute unto the poor . . . and come, follow Me." And to those who did so follow He had promised, "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or lands, for My sake and the Gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time." Rees saw that if he gave £1, the Saviour said he was to get £100. Could this be true? If it was, he would surely look forward to the day when he would come to his extremity. But was it true? That was what captured his imagination—not the fact of being without money, but the possibility of it being replaced through the promises. Could that exchange really take place, and he get the hundredfold?

The day came when he reached his last pound. The Holy Spirit then told him, "Cut the ropes and take the promises." It was a direct call to step out on God. But it is always easier to talk of such things than actually to do them. It had been much easier to give £100 out of plenty, than to part with this last £1 and come to the end of his savings—for the first time in fifteen years. "Oh, how the devil pitied me, and brought such arguments!" he said. "He told me it would be a step in the dark, and that if there was a convention or anything of that kind, I wouldn't be able to go, unless I had £1 laid by. But the Holy Ghost showed me that if God wanted me to go anywhere, He would surely provide the means. The danger was on the other side; for while a person has money, he can go without consulting God, like Jonah, who could afford to pay his passage to run away from Him! The fact is, we can never really be bondservants until God does control our means."

So he took the plunge and learned the blessed truth that his extremity was God's opportunity. His eyes were opened to the fact that he had a claim on God for what he could not supply himself. Just as surely as the Spirit had told him that the people of the village had a claim

on his money to meet their needs, so now he saw that he had a claim on God's resources to meet his. The first week his need was for £2, and he was able to tell the Lord in his prayer that he would not have come to Him, if he had had it himself. "I was only asking the Lord to do what I would have done if I had had the money; and it was for His work. It came and what joy I had in finding that I had finished with the limited resources of man, and begun on the unlimited resources of God! The promises of God had replaced money in the bank, and become equal to current coin to me. I no longer had to carry my treasure with me wherever I went, because I knew where the Treasury was, and how to reach it!"

The greatest test in the village came, when a strike was imminent. The last had continued for eight months, with great hardships to the work-people, and Mr. Howells realized that the next one might go on as long. With this burden weighing on him, the Lord asked him one question. Would he allow the Holy Ghost to do through him for the people of the village what he would do for his own family? The Bible had promised that bread and water would be sure. Would he make that promise to the village and give them bread and cheese, and tea and sugar? He knew the two grocers would give him credit, though they would not allow any to the villagers. Would he run up to £100? It was a tremendous challenge. How could he do such a thing? It was not till the Sunday night before the strike was due to begin that he came up to it. Then he told them in the meeting, "This strike may last nine months, but not one of you will be in need of what God has promised. There is no need for one of you to be troubled or fearful." The blessing that came down that night was so great, he said, that they had to close the meeting and go out to

the open air. "It seemed that the singing ascended to heaven and the angels came down to meet us."

The next morning he happened to meet a well-known agnostic, who at once started grumbling at the uselessness of the church, and railing against the mining authorities as the cause of the strike. "Well, what are you yourself going to do for the people in their sufferings?" Mr. Howells asked him; and then he told him what the Lord had made him promise the people the night before. The man was dumb. This was a Christianity against which there was no argument. Before he could recover, the newspaper boy came by with the news that the strike had been settled.

Every night for three years, Rees Howells went over to that village, walking two miles each way after his day's work was over. The weather never stopped him. One night, when he arrived home soaked, after crossing the bleak common in a downpour, his father remarked, "I wouldn't have walked across there to-night for £20." "Nor would I for £20!" answered Rees.

## *Chapter Eight*

### THE TRAMPS

**E**VERY YOUNG SERVANT OF GOD HAS TO LEARN TO keep under the body, and in the early days of his training, he goes through necessary disciplines. "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off . . ."

God began to deal with a simple appetite in Rees Howells—the love of food. It was at a time when he had a great burden for a certain convention, which was being disrupted by assaults of the enemy. The Lord called him to a day of prayer and fasting, which was something new to him. Used, as he was, to a comfortable home and four good meals a day, it came as a shock to realize that it meant no dinner, and he was agitating about it. And would it only happen once? Supposing God asked him to do it every day!

When midday came he was on his knees in his bedroom, but there was no prayer that next hour. "I didn't know such a lust was in me," he said afterwards. "My agitation was the proof of the grip it had on me. If the thing had no power over me, why did I argue about it?"

At one o'clock his mother called him, and he told her he wasn't taking lunch. But she called again, as a mother would, and urged, "It won't take you long to have it." The goodly aroma from downstairs was too much for him, and down he came. But after the meal, when he returned to his room, he couldn't get back into the presence of God. He came face to face with disobedience to the Holy Ghost. "I felt I was like the man in

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the garden of Eden," he said. "I went up the mountain and walked miles, cursing that 'old man' within me. I felt that if God were to take lunch from me to the end of my days, He would be justified in doing it. To some people there might seem nothing in it, but once you are God's channel, on no account can you disobey Him, or bring in your own ideas. I wept many tears, and it almost seemed as if He would never allow me to come back into His presence, till He said, 'I will forgive you, but you are not to go unpunished. You hold up your hands while you pray from 6 to 9 o'clock.'" (Ex. 17 : 11, 12; 1 Tim. 2 : 8.) The closer a person is to God, the more terrible is the least sin seen to be.

He didn't take dinner for many days after that, but spent the hour with God. As he said later, "The moment I got victory in it, it wasn't a very big thing to do; it was merely a stepping-stone to His next call to me. It is while you still want a thing that you can't get your mind off it. When you have risen above it, He may give it back to you; but then you are out of it."

Not long after this, and only a few months after he had started the ministry in the village, the Lord gave him a further commission, for which these lessons were an obvious preparation. He laid on him the burden of the tramps, the many men who were to be found in that district, wandering homeless and jobless from place to place. They were to give a chance to every tramp that came to the mission. It was to be a practical lesson of what divine love is towards an undeserving sinner. The Spirit made plain what they were to do: to give each man a new suit of clothes, find him lodgings and work, and pay his board until he drew his first pay. "We were called to put Isaiah 58 into practice," said Mr. Howells. "'Deal thy bread to the hungry . . . bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; and when thou seest

the naked, cover him.' In our first love; we had blamed everyone who did not believe that the Bible was literally true, and the Spirit now compelled us to put our own belief into practice! The Sermon on the Mount stated the laws of the Kingdom, and we were to act on them to the hilt: 'If any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also . . . Give to him that asketh thee . . . Love your enemies . . .'

"I soon found out also that the aim of the Spirit in this was to bring me to that grade in life where I would love the unlovely ones. My self-nature and natural love had to be changed for the divine nature and love, before I could love a tramp as my own brother. Helping the people of the village was easy compared with helping the tramps, for they were people who usually would not help themselves, and often did not appreciate the help of others. But I was to act towards each exactly as I would if he were my own brother."

The very day of this new commission they saw a tramp in their meeting for the first time. He had been on the road for months, without work or lodgings, and had heard the singing in the mission. He was overcome with the reception he was given. One of the believers provided him with lodgings and found him work. In two days another came. "News of charity is like wireless," Mr. Howells said, "carried far and wide in no time, and a greater number came than we had bargained for. We were not allowed to stop them; if they came of their own accord, we did not dare to turn them away. I didn't call them tramps, I preferred the name the Saviour used, and called them prodigals; and I learned, according to 1 John 4:20, that you don't love the Saviour one bit more than you love the least one He died for."

In all this the Spirit was leading His servant more

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and more into the secret of intercession—the identification of the intercessor with the ones for whom he prays. He had called him to associate with Will Battery, which had touched his pride. He had made him responsible for the debts of Jim Stakes, which had touched his pocket. Now He called him to share in the physical sufferings of the destitute, which would touch his body. He was to learn a little how to feel as they felt and sit where they sat. Tramps did not have the plentiful food that other people have, and God called him to come down to their level. The Government lodging houses provided two meals a day for tramps, and the Lord told Rees Howells to live in the same way, on two meals of bread and cheese and soup. The mid-day fasts had been a preparation for this.

The difficulty was naturally in his own home, where his mother was most unwilling to let him live like that, while doing the heavy work of a miner. However, he insisted, backing his arguments by reference to the four young men in Babylon, who, after their days of abstinence, looked "fairer and fatter" than the rest. His mother had to consent, although the story goes that with motherly ingenuity she put all the nourishment she could into the evening soup!

He had one meal at 6.30 in the morning, and the other at 5.30 in the evening, after his day's work in the pit, and before he started for the village. It was a battle at first, both physically and mentally, eating at the same table with the others, and having different food. "There was great suspicion about where this new thing would end," he said, "and what my object was in doing it. Neither they nor myself had ever seen a man called to fasting, and they thought 'the experiment' would soon come to an end. But in less than a fortnight, the Lord had so changed my appetites that I preferred those two

meals a day to the four I used to have. That craving for food was taken out of me, and through the whole period my health was better than anyone else's. I never had a shade of headache, and my body was fit as could be." He lived like that for two and a half years.

Supplying the needs of the tramps soon absorbed all the earnings of the little group at the mission, and they were forced on still farther into a life of faith. The parable of the friend at midnight was very real to them in those days, the only difference being that he only went once to disturb his friend, but they were forced to go almost every night! They proved, said Mr. Howells, what the Rev. Evan Hopkins used to teach of the three positions: struggling, clinging, and resting. The illustration Mr. Hopkins used was of a shipwreck, when people are thrown into the sea. In the *struggling* position they are in the water, fighting with the waves, and are in need of help themselves. In the *clinging* position they are holding on to the boat; they are quite safe themselves, but cannot help anyone else, because both their hands are occupied. In the *resting* position they are sitting in the boat with both hands free to help others. The place of deliverance was always when they got to the resting faith.

"When we first started to help them," Rees said, "we were afraid too many would come in the same fortnight, and that we could not provide for them; and while there was fear, there was inward struggle. We soon found out that we could not provide, and that was just the place to which the Lord wanted us to come. Then we had to find out that God could, if we would trust Him. The Holy Ghost allowed us to be failures once or twice, so we left off struggling and trying to do it ourselves. We clung to God's promises, pleading with Him to come to our rescue, and He never failed us.

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"After many hard experiences we found the resting place. We became like waiters serving in a restaurant; it wasn't our business whether ten, fifteen or twenty would come, we knew the Manager would not fail to provide what was needed. We told the Lord to send as many as He liked! We paid the grocer's bill every two weeks, when we got together and emptied our pockets. On one occasion, when we knew the bill was heavy, one sick brother, who was not earning, said, 'I am ashamed that I have only got 4½d. Shall I put that in?' The answer was, 'Yes. It will be like the widow's mite.' We entered the store, were given the bill, and found that the 4½d. made up the money needed to the penny. We learned that night not to despise the little gifts. Over and over again we found the money coming to the needed penny, and that gave us more joy than if we had had £10 over."

In three months many of these men were helped; each received a new suit of clothes, was found work, and put in good lodgings. Some received eternal life. One evening sixteen of them were in the meeting, well dressed, and singing from their hearts, "It is well with my soul"; and a brother sitting next to Mr. Howells whispered, "Yes, and with their bodies too!"

But only those who have done such work can know its real cost. There were occasions when the same tramp came back after he had been given a new suit of clothes. He had sold it, and come for another! There was an elderly woman who had fallen very low through drink and would wander in the streets "seeing things." They found her a lodging, but when she fell ill with pneumonia, neither her son nor her daughter would nurse her. Mr. Howells himself was up with her one whole night, and on his return home in the morning, even his mother rebuked him for "being up all night looking

after that old sinner." Rees had to remind her that the Father received us all back "with nothing but our filthy rags." In another instance he found a house for a family of tramps, and got the husband work. When another family came for help, he asked the first ones to share their house with them, as it was large enough. "What! take tramps into our home!" was the answer he received; without a word he turned away and sought another place for them.

"After many months in this school of faith," said Rees, "the Holy Ghost put such love in our hearts towards these people that we would rather be without ourselves, than allow them to be in want. We became fathers to them. There were many disappointments; but some were allowed to disappoint us, because it was part of our training. Some did not appreciate the kindness, but have often grieved the Holy Ghost, and trampled under foot the Blood of the Covenant. We had plenty of facts with which to silence the critics, who were many."

Rees's final test with the tramps was in his own home. Anything in the way of cast-off clothing he had already been accustomed to take over to the village. Indeed, his mother made a joke of the fact that whereas they used to have a box-room full of worn garments, after a while she couldn't find a bit of cloth with which to patch anything! But the test became more severe when the tramps began to come to the house. The Lord had told Rees that he was not to take a different place for himself at home from that which was given to the tramps. "I knew that to turn them out would be to turn the Saviour out," he said; "and I could see a test coming. It might mean I would have to make a stand and walk out." Then one night it came to a head. Some members of the family said they would leave the home if things went on like

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that. Every time they came home from work, these tramps were there, and they always sat in their father's chair and did not get up when he entered; also they said that they would not be responsible if anything happened to their mother when they were all out. "It was one of the worst tests in my life," said Rees, "seeing the possibility of my father's home being broken up. But my father was given great wisdom in the answer he made. He said to the others, 'If I stop the tramps, are you willing for me to stop your friends coming? We all bring our friends home, and if Rees has sunk so low as to have only tramps for his friends, they must be free to come too.' The victory was won, and the strange part was that after that not another tramp came to the house."

## *Chapter Nine*

### BINDING THE STRONG MAN

ONE NIGHT, WHEN REES HOWELLS AND HIS FRIENDS were returning from the village, they passed a group of women, who never came to the meetings. They could tell by their voices that they had been drinking; and one of the party exclaimed, "Where is the power to change these people?" It was a challenge, and Rees Howells took it. There and then the Spirit gave it to him that he was to pick out the ringleader of those women, who was a notorious character and confirmed drunkard, and pray her into the Kingdom by Christmas Day.

This was something new. He had seen many drunkards converted, but the Lord had worked through his personal contacts with them; in this case, however, he had no connexion with the woman, and the Lord told him that he was to use no personal influence, but to reach her by way of the Throne. It would be a real test of strength. Could the Holy Spirit through him use the power of the atonement to break the devil's dominion in her life and fulfil the Saviour's word in Matt. 12 : 29, about binding the strong man and stealing his goods? He saw that if he could get this one visible proof of the devil's defeat, the Holy Ghost could apply the victory through him on a large scale. To do this, the Spirit gave him John 15 : 7: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." It would all depend on his abiding.

As this "abiding" was to take such a central place in his future life of intercession, it is important to see what the Holy Spirit taught Mr. Howells about it. This key text, John 15 : 7, makes it plain that the promise is unlimited, but its fulfilment depends on the abiding. That is why, in all cases of intercession, Mr. Howells constantly spoke of guarding his "place of abiding". The Scriptural key to abiding is in 1 John 2 : 6, "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also to walk, even as He walked." In other words, it meant being willing for the Holy Spirit to live through him the life the Saviour would have lived, if He had been in his place.

The way Mr. Howells maintained this abiding was by spending a set time of waiting upon God every day during the period in which the intercession lasted. The Holy Spirit would then speak to him through the Word, revealing any standard that he was to come up to, particularly in "the laws of the Kingdom"—the Sermon on the Mount. Any command the Spirit gave him, he must fulfil, because the way of abiding is the keeping of His commandments (John 15 : 10). The Spirit would also search his heart and throw light on his daily life, revealing any motives or actions that needed confession and cleansing in the Blood. But the Spirit's dealings were not so much with outward shortcomings as with the self-nature out of which they sprang. Any transgression was never to be repeated, but specific obedience on that point would be called for until a radical inward change was effected. He was "purified . . . in obeying the truth through the Spirit". (1 Peter 1 : 22.) He could never come into God's presence unless he had obeyed all that had been given him on the previous day.

The necessity for abiding is seen in that same chapter—John 15. The life is in the Vine. As the branch re-

mains united to it by abiding in it, that life of the Vine produces the fruit through the branch. In other words, the power is in Christ. As the intercessor remains united to Him by abiding in Him, His power operates through the intercessor and accomplishes what needs to be done.

As Mr. Howells would continue in this place of abiding day by day, he would be increasingly conscious that the Spirit was engaging the enemy in battle and overcoming him, until finally he would become fully assured of the victory. The Spirit would then tell him that the intercession was finished, the position gained, and he would await the visible deliverance in praise and faith.

There are degrees and stages in abiding. The deeper the oneness, the more the power of the risen life of Christ can operate through the channel, and new positions of spiritual authority be gained. Rees Howells's abiding was always according to the light given up to that time. In that sense abiding in a particular period could be called "perfect", and the victory claimed, although there would still be further ways in which he was to become more like the Saviour.

During the first week of the abiding, the Lord spoke to him nightly on many things. "He began to deal with my nature," he said, "and show me things I never dreamed were there, getting deep down to my motives. It was a daily dying. Over and over again I thought: Is it possible to retreat?" But with obedience came cleansing, until by the second week he said, "I had become more used to my position, and could see the Holy Ghost binding the devil. I soon realized I was not fighting against flesh and blood, but 'against wicked spirits in heavenly places'." The weeks that followed, as he "gave prompt obedience to the Holy Spirit in all things", were times of wonderful fellowship, until by the end of the sixth week the Spirit told him the abiding was complete,

and the victory assured. "I was abiding now without being called to abide, walking in the position, and, the Lord told me that I could now expect to see this woman make a move."

That very night, with a thrill in his soul, he saw her in the open air meeting for the first time, and he told the devil, "Now I know that the Holy Ghost is stronger than you; you have been brought to nought on Calvary."

He took no steps to influence the woman in any way, but soon she began to come to the cottage meetings. A great number of people became onlookers, as they had heard of the prayer. It was now a case of praising before the victory, and in the remaining six weeks before Christmas the Holy Spirit did not allow him to pray for her. "It was a conflict with not praying," he said, "as the adversary pressed on us the need of prayer; but it would have been a prayer of doubt." During that time, there was no outward sign of repentance in the woman.

Christmas morning came, and the word he had was, *Go up and possess it*. "I had a chance of experiencing what men like Moses went through in telling a thing beforehand," he said. "Not a single doubt came to my mind that day, and how strong I was! I was praising the Lord all day. I would not look at my Christmas cards or presents, for this was my Christmas gift!"

When the time for the meeting came, the woman was there, but a lot of the people had brought their children; there was plenty of noise, and in no sense the kind of atmosphere which would influence a person to repent. But in the middle of the meeting "down she went on her knees and cried to God for mercy. It was a victory beyond value, and she is standing to-day."

Within a short time, Rees Howells was able to prove again that a great secret had been learned. A manager

of a works in the neighbourhood, although he boasted that he had never been on his knees in prayer, had been touched by what had been done for the tramps, and gave them jobs in his factory. He used to say to any of them that came to him, "You are living on the backs of those young men, are you? You start here to-morrow!"

His wife had been blessed, so it came to the band of young workers to pray him through to salvation. As they waited on God, the question arose, How could they get at him? Finally they were definitely led to pray that he would invite them to his home. He did—the following Sunday—although, to avoid frightening him, they didn't say anything about prayer, but just sang hymns and had a happy time together. They were invited again for tea, and this time he was more at ease. He then asked them to come the following Thursday to hold a meeting. "As soon as we left his house that night," said Mr. Howells, "the Holy Ghost told me to apply the gained position of intercession. We joined together in a ring and prayed, 'Now, Lord, the devil has been bound, don't allow this man to escape, don't give him a second chance'. The Lord then told us to abide until next Thursday and we would get the victory."

When the Thursday evening came, four of them were walking up to the village, and as they passed a group of houses, the Spirit said to Mr. Howells, without any previous warning, "Go to that house and knock at the door." How could he do such a thing? He didn't even know anyone in that row of houses. How could he knock at a strange door without any known reason, or even a tract to give? The guidance seemed so strange that he could not bring himself to act on it. He passed the house, and went on a few hundred yards, when the Lord's hand came on him, and He told him emphatically that he was not to go to the meeting, unless he went via

that house. He knew there was no escaping now, so he turned back and took one of his friends with him.

When they knocked at the door, a little girl opened it, and without any questions, invited them in. There they found a woman lying in bed in the last stages of consumption. When Mr. Howells told her who they were, she raised both her hands and exclaimed, "God has answered my prayer! I have been asking Him all this day to send you here!" The night before, her friends had thought she was dying and had sent for the minister. He had brought the sacrament, but she refused to take it, because she hadn't peace. Someone had told her of their work in the mission, and it came to her that the ones who had brought such blessing there, could surely help her to find peace. The woman had been a church member for years, but had no assurance of salvation, and as she was sinking, the fear of death had taken hold of her. They were able to point her to Calvary and she accepted Christ that night. As she had the assurance and came free, it was "joy fathomless as the sea." Every Thursday evening after that, they had a meeting in her house, and she never ceased to thank them, until she passed peacefully away into the presence of the King.

They were late in getting to the meeting in the home of the works manager, but the Lord did more in a few minutes through their obedience than might have been done in hours without it. While they were telling what had happened to the dying woman, the manager went down on his knees, as if he had been shot, pulling his chair on top of him, and pleaded with God to have mercy on him. "It was an opened heaven," said Rees Howells, "and we joined the angels in their joy over a sinner that had repented."

## *Chapter Ten*

### A BRANCH IN THE VINE

**T**HERE WAS TO BE A SPECIAL MEETING ONE NIGHT IN the village, and a friend of Rees Howells was to give the address. The two had arranged to walk over to the village together, but when it was time to start, the special speaker sent word that he could not come. On hearing this, Rees was greatly upset, and he realized why. He had not been carrying a burden for the meeting that day as he usually did; he had been depending more on his friend than on the Holy Spirit. He soon found also that the Presence which always accompanied him on the nightly journey to the village was withdrawn, and the Spirit was grieved. He walked about half-way with a heavy heart until he could bear it no longer. "Please forgive me," he said to the Lord. "I promise that it will never happen again. If You will only come and give victory in this meeting, then I vow like Jephthah that on my return to-night, I will give You whatever You ask."

There was great blessing in the meeting, and walking home, as he came to the place of his vow, he asked the Lord what He would have of him. The answer was unexpected. "After to-night," the Lord said, "I want you to be a steward, and not an owner. Will you give up all claim on your money to Me?" Rees did not understand this. Was not his money already the Lord's? The Lord then showed him his position. He had previously faced the fact that he could not ask God to meet a need if he

could supply it himself. So all his money had actually been spent in the Lord's work. But it was still his money, and he had the joy of giving it, and the right to give or withhold. "In future, as a steward," the Lord said, "you will not have the right even to give without My permission. And not a penny of My money will be spent except on essentials." Explaining what He meant by this, the Lord asked him, "If you had a family of children who were without food or clothing, would you spend a penny on a daily paper, or on any non-essential?" "No." "Well, the world is My parish, and while there is one person needing the necessities of life, you will not spend a penny on anything else."

He faced what it would mean to lose that joy of giving, and the bondage he would be in for the rest of his days. But he had come before God to pay his vow. So, turning from the path, he knelt on the grass at the side of the road, and as there was no else present, he called the stars and the cloud of witnesses to record that from that night on he was only a channel.

As he walked on the enemy whispered, "Do you know what you have done? You are worse off than a man in Swansea gaol. He gets a little which he can spend when he comes out, but you will never have a penny." "Yes," answered Rees, "but, remember this—I did it by choice." The moment he said that, "it seemed as if the whole heavens were illuminated," and the Holy Spirit said to him, "Let Me tell you what you have done. To-night I have grafted you into the Vine, and all the sap can flow through you. You are a branch in the Saviour. The branch gets nothing—it is the needy that get the fruit. But after to-night, from this place of abiding, whatever the Father wants to pour out to the world through you, He can do so. 'Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.' Because you have done this for Me,

you are no longer a servant, but I have called you a friend." A friend of the Trinity! It was a personal revelation of the Saviour's words in John 15, and for days, Rees said, the joy and realization of it overcame him.

For the next eighteen months he never spent a penny except on necessities; and it was through that period that he had all sense of the ownership of money taken out of him. The real test, as it often is, was on a very fine point, and did not come for four months. It was a matter of one penny and, as he remarked, "it shows how keenly the Husbandman watches the branch."

At the last Llandrindod Convention he had met a gentleman from London, Mr. John Gosset, of whom we are to hear more. This friend had asked for his address, and then at Christmas sent him two books and a card. The conflict came over the desire to send a New Year's card back to him with a letter of thanks. He said, "I naturally wanted to return the compliment. I thought, It will only cost me a penny; but the Holy Ghost made plain that what mattered was not the amount, but the principle, and the obedience in maintaining the position. A New Year's card was not a necessity of life!" So he wrote to Mr. Gosset thanking him for the books, at the same time giving him the reason for not sending a card. After the letter had been posted, an attack came from the accuser of the brethren, "Now you have insulted your friend! You are suggesting that he is misusing his money." However, the young steward was able to trust his Master that He would not let the enemy convey a false impression, which was not intended.

Two weeks later, they were praying for £2 and had to get it on a certain day. That very morning a letter came from London. It was from Mr. Gosset, and when Mr. Howells opened it, the first thing he found was £2 en-

closed. The letter ran: "Received your letter, and the blessing I got through it was of more value to me than all the Christmas and New Year cards put together. Every Sunday I visit the Westminster hospital, so last Sunday your letter was my sermon to the patients: A position gained through grace. Whenever you need money for your work, if you will only let me know, it will be my joy to share in it." That, of course, Mr. Howells would never do; his needs were to be made known only by way of the Throne. "But," he added, "I found it quite easy to reach this gentleman in that way! He became a great friend, and was often used by the Lord to answer our prayers."

In commenting later on this radical dealing of the Spirit with him, Mr. Howells said: "I finished with ownership once for all. I became as dead to money as to the stones on the road. It was a great joy in those days to think that the Saviour had made me a branch, just a channel through which His own resurrection life could flow to the needy world. There is no closer relationship than between a branch and the Vine. But one thing the Husbandman cannot do is to graft the old life into the Vine. Self can never abide in the Saviour, not one atom of it. Before you can be grafted into the Vine, you must be cut off from the old life. That had been going on and there were many stages in my life before this came. Without His new life, all our activity and work is, in the sight of God, as nothing. Yet the Vine can't do anything without the branch. All the sap of the Tree is running through the branch. And when this new life flows through us, every bit of us tingles with it, even our very body itself. If the Vine has joy, the branch has the same joy, and the needy get the fruit."

In future years Rees Howells was to handle the Lord's money by the thousands, and, as he later said, "He has

never questioned me on anything I spent." For such a stewardship, with never again a claim to ownership, the experience of that night and the eighteen months' obedience which followed formed the essential preparation.

## *Chapter Eleven*

### THE CONSUMPTIVE WOMAN

THE FIRST CASE OF SEVERE ILLNESS AMONG THE converts in the village brought a new challenge to Mr. Howells. It was the woman with the burnt bread. She developed consumption. The doctor had given her up, and she was expected to die, when one evening she revived remarkably, and announced to her friends that the Great Physician had told her she was to be healed.

In the morning she sent for Mr. Howells and questioned him as to whether the Lord had revealed anything to him; but he said He had not, for up to that time the Holy Spirit had never given him any prayers for healing. It was the same for the next three nights, but he comforted her by saying that he would pray about it.

The next night, as he waited before the Lord, the Spirit told him that he could take up the prayer for her, and gave him Moses' supplication in Numbers 12 : 13, "Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee", as well as the word he had so often been given before, in John 15 : 7, "If ye abide in Me . . . ye shall ask what ye will . . ." It was a great encouragement to the woman when she knew the Lord's word had come, and there was a sensation through the village, when they heard that this was to be the next challenge of faith.

Although he was ready to go deeper with God, Mr. Howells confessed that there was some fear as he entered this time of "abiding". The obedience already had

been so costly, that he was afraid of what might come now in gaining this new position. He was not told at the outset how long it would take, but actually he was in this prayer for six months. And, as he put it, "there was a daily obedience, a daily abiding, and a daily going through."

As the prayer continued, there were two things that were taking hold of him in ever-increasing measure. In the first place, he was arrested by that Scripture, He "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matt. 8 : 17), and realized for the first time that, through His atoning sacrifice, the Saviour had provided, not only for the forgiveness of our sins, but for a full redemption from all the effects of sin and the fall. Since He was "made a curse for us", why should these sufferers continue to bear the effects of that curse?

Because he believed that Christ "bare our sins in His own body on the Tree", Mr. Howells always offered to sinners, not only freedom from the guilt and penalty of sin, but also from the power and domination of sin. "But," he reasoned, "if He also 'bare our sicknesses', why do I not offer healing in His Name just as freely? Why should there not be freedom from the power and dominion of sickness?" Anything less than this he felt was not giving to the Saviour the glory He deserved, and he resolved to pay any price to prove that this power was in the atonement.

In the second place, during the "abiding" of those months, he learnt much more than ever before of the Holy Ghost as a divine Intercessor. It is part of His ministry on earth to "make intercession for the saints according to the will of God... with groanings that cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8 : 26, 27). The great truth that was coming to His servant with ever-increasing clearness was that the Holy Ghost can only make

intercession through those human temples He indwells; also that He can never intercede in any arbitrary way, but only just as far as His channel can become one with Him in so doing.

Mr. Howells had already known something of the groanings of the Spirit in him for the needy and afflicted in the village, for Will Battery and the tramps, and the obediences that were called for. But what would it mean to intercede for a consumptive? As an intercessor, he must enter into the sufferings and take the place of the one prayed for. He knew that a bed-ridden consumptive could have no normal home life, was confined to one room, and was cut off from everything that once comprised the interests and pleasures of life. So during this time of "abiding" the Holy Spirit went much deeper in identifying him with the suffering of others. And as He did so, it was not just this one woman, but the consumptives and sufferers of the world whose burden came upon him.

Mr. Howells had not gone very far on this path before the conviction took definite hold of him that, before he was through, the Lord would literally let this disease come upon him, and that only as an actual consumptive would he fully be able to intercede for consumptives. That this was not a foolish imagination, but a practical possibility, will be seen later in his life when, after taking great personal risks to care for a consumptive, it looked as though he had contracted the disease. Moreover, in all the earlier intercessions he had literally had to take the place of, and live like, the ones prayed for.

He faced up to what this would mean, and found grace to be willing for it, if thereby the Lord could restore this mother to her family of children; and he had great joy in thinking that, after the victory in one case, the Lord might then release many more.

During the months that the Lord was speaking to him like this, He was also helping the woman in a marvellous way. They were very poor, and could not afford to buy all the kinds of food she would like to have, but if there was anything she fancied, some person would be sure to walk in with that very thing. Every evening Mr. Howells and the others would come to hear her answers to prayer, and "laugh as merrily as children". All the district came to know that they were praying for her, and the doctor said she was not living on her lungs—so "she was living on prayer".

The crisis came on the evening before Good Friday. That night she told her friends that she was sinking and felt she was going to die. Mr. Howells could not take it, and urged her not to lose faith after all these months of intercession. The whole district had been told that she was going to be healed, and he could not think of taking failure now. But she persisted that she was dying. As he left to go home, the full realization of what she had said came to him. It was a dark moment. "Dark outside," he said, "but darker inside." He sought to examine the position. Was anything wrong with his abiding? No, he had lived it "day by day, hour by hour", and the Spirit bore witness to that. "Then she is not to die," he said to the Lord. But the answer he received was unexpected. "The intercession you made was for a consumptive. Now death has come. If she is to be delivered, accept death in her place to-night."

In all sincerity he had offered himself to be a consumptive in her stead; but he had not faced the fact that the end of consumption is an early death. The Lord was only asking him to do what he had said all along that he would be willing to do—to take the place of this woman that she might be delivered. But now that would mean death in a matter of hours. He had often

felt there was a glow upon the Saviour's words, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends", but now there was no glow—only darkness.

It was not that fleshly ties held him to this world, but there was the work of the mission, the souls he loved there, and the future he believed the Holy Ghost had planned for him. To leave it all then and there, and to face in cold blood that separation of soul and body, was more than he could be willing for.

He said, "It was an awful night, for I had lost the face of God. That was the first night I ever went to bed without prayer, and I made up my mind not to go any further in this life of intercession, nor to show anyone about this point of failure. All that night I blamed myself that I ever started it. It would have been better, I thought, if I had gone on in a life of faith and not touched this question of healing.

"I got up the next morning, not intending to go to work, but I did not go on my knees—I could not face the Holy Ghost; I felt that He was a stranger to me. I went to see my friend who was also praying for her, and the first question, as always, was, 'How is she?' Then, 'What is the last place of abiding?' I burst into tears and told him that I had failed, and could not go through. It was worse than Egyptian darkness.

"That evening the Holy Ghost spoke to me again. I shall never forget it. How sweet His voice was to me. He said, 'You didn't realize it was a privilege I offered you yesterday.' 'A privilege?' 'Yes, you were offered a place among the martyrs.' In a moment the scales fell from my eyes, and I saw that glorious army of martyrs in the heavenly City, and the Saviour looking for a thousand years on those who had done for Him what He did for them. A martyr is one who has voluntarily

shortened his life down here for the Saviour's sake, not merely one who dies in the course of duty; and the Lord showed me that I was to be among that number. I was afraid at first that I had forfeited my chance through my unwillingness the night before. I begged the Lord to forgive me, and I would gladly do what He asked me. I stepped into death—but there was no death there! I found that the Saviour had drunk every drop of that cup for us. 'That bitter cup, love drank it up; Now blessing's draught for me.' In a moment I found I was on 'the other side'."

Caught up by the glory of what he had seen, Mr. Howells ran two miles to the sick woman's house to tell her what had happened. He called them all to pray that the Lord would make the transaction then and there—that He would heal her and take him to glory that night. He felt it could not be chance that it was Good Friday; and surely it was the Lord's will to accept his life on the day the Saviour had been "obedient unto death". Many were in tears, and the woman herself refused to pray.

When he visited her the next evening, he saw at once that something had happened. Her face was radiant as an angel's and she was wanting everybody to come to her bedroom and hear about it. As she had meditated upon what Mr. Howells had told her, she was not willing for it, for he had been more than a father to her and to so many in the village; so she went on her knees in her bed and prayed, "Lord, I don't want to be healed. Don't allow any to pray for this illness to be put on him; he is more useful to You than I am, and I don't want to be delivered at his expense." The moment she prayed that, she too was caught up into His presence, and lost herself in praising her Saviour. The room was filled with His glory and she went on praising all night.

"The weeks that followed were nothing less than heaven upon earth," said Mr. Howells. "We didn't pray; there was no need for prayer, we only waited for God to do His will. There was far more attraction in being called to fill the gap and go right to glory, than to be allowed to remain down here and do a little mission work. Every day for three months I expected my life to be taken, and the Lord allowed it to be like that, so that I should not be doing it under the influence of the moment. I longed to be with God. There was such reality in that song, 'The streets I am told are all paved with pure gold. And the sun it shall never go down'."

Then after three months, the Lord called her home suddenly. On a Saturday morning when Mr. Howells was at his work, the message came that he was wanted at once. But before he arrived, she had passed away. As he sat in the house, the Lord dealt with him for over an hour. "Although there were other people in the room," he said, "I was alone with God. He told me that although He had accepted my intercession, He was not going to take my life now; but He wanted to use me as a 'living martyr'. I had never heard such an expression before, but He made me understand that if I ever claimed any right to my life more than a dead man has, I should forfeit my position.

"So far as the case of healing was concerned, I was to walk it as a failure, and not make a word of defence. All the district knew I was praying for this woman's healing, and now I had failed openly. It was such a reaction, instead of the glory we had anticipated. Just as I came through to being willing for this, one of the converts came in. She said that before our dear sister passed away, she had left a message for me. 'Tell Rees and the others that I can't wait for them. The Saviour has come for me, and I want to go with Him. Tell them

I will come back to meet them' (1 Thess. 4 : 14). Then she had said good-bye, shaken hands all round, and had gone to be with the Lord.

"That glorious testimony of the first of the mission to sleep in Jesus made this 'failure' the sweetest thing in the world. The first test came in the funeral. Hundreds of people had gathered, because they had heard so much about her, and especially about the healing. The minister who was to officiate was not in sympathy with the work at that time. He opened his Bible at Job 13 : 1-5, and read, 'Lo, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it... But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value. Oh that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom.' He was on one side of the grave and I on the other, and that in more senses than one! I heard what he said, but was unmoved as though I hadn't heard. The Lord then led me to make a few remarks on the life she lived before we went to the village, and the transformed life afterwards. The proof of it was in the triumph she had over death, for death was swallowed up in victory. I told how she had said the Lord had come to fetch her, how she wanted to go, and had said good-bye to those around her. I said, 'Have you ever heard of a person who is dying, shaking hands with everyone, as though she was going on a journey?' The people started to sing as in a revival. The heavens opened and the victory was such that they all started waving their handkerchiefs—even the mourners had to join in. I never pitied a man as I pitied the minister. The sad grave was turned to be the gate of heaven, and from that funeral we had the beginning of resurrection life in the mission.

"It was after that the Holy Ghost revealed why it had been necessary to take this case—'that no flesh should

glory in His presence.' In a great position like this, God would not be free to use it through a person who had not first 'died' to it. It is death first and then resurrection. As the first-born and the first-fruits were to be given back to the Lord, so the first case of healing, the first-fruits of this intercession, belonged to the Lord and had to go to the altar."

## *Chapter Twelve*

### WHAT IS AN INTERCESSOR?

THE CENTRAL TRUTH, WHICH THE HOLY GHOST gradually revealed to Mr. Howells, and which was the mainspring of his whole life's ministry, was that of intercession. The Spirit can be seen leading him into this in all His dealings with him, from the time He took full possession of him in the Llandrindod Convention, until, in his dealings with the consumptive woman, the meaning of intercession became fully clear. From then onward the Spirit was constantly leading him both to gain new positions as an intercessor, and to reveal the precious truths he had learned to others able to bear them. It will be useful, therefore, to stop a moment and to look a little more carefully into what is meant by being an intercessor.

That God seeks intercessors, but seldom finds them, is plain from the pain of His exclamation through Isaiah: "He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor"; and His protest of disappointment through Ezekiel: "I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before Me for the land . . . but I found none."

Perhaps believers in general have regarded intercession as just some form of rather intensified prayer. It is, so long as there is great emphasis on the word "intensified"; for there are three things to be seen in an intercessor, which are not necessarily found in ordinary prayer: identification, agony and authority.

## WHAT IS AN INTERCESSOR?

The identification of the intercessor with the ones for whom he intercedes is perfectly seen in the Saviour. Of Him it was said that He poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and *made intercession* for the transgressors. As the Divine Intercessor, interceding for a lost world, He drained the cup of our lost condition to its last drop, He "tasted death for every man". To do that, in the fullest possible sense, He sat where we sit. By taking our nature upon Himself, by learning obedience through the things which He suffered, by being tempted in all points like as we are, by becoming poor for our sakes, and finally by being made sin for us, He gained the position in which, with the fullest authority as the captain of our salvation made perfect through sufferings, and the fullest understanding of all we go through, He can ever live to make intercession for us, and by effective pleadings with the Father "is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him." Identification is thus the first law of the intercessor. He pleads effectively because he gives his life for those he pleads for; he is their genuine representative; he has submerged his self-interest in their needs and sufferings, and as far as possible has literally taken their place.

There is another Intercessor, and in Him we see the agony of this ministry; for He, the Holy Spirit, "maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." This One, the only present Intercessor on earth, has no hearts upon which He can lay His burdens, and no bodies through which He can suffer and work, except the hearts and bodies of those who are His dwelling place. Through them He does His intercessory work on earth, and they become intercessors by reason of the Intercessor within them. It is real life to which He calls them, the very same kind of life, in lesser

measure, which the Saviour Himself lived on earth.

But before He can lead a chosen vessel into such a life of intercession, He first has to deal to the bottom with all that is natural. Love of money, personal ambition, natural affection for parents and loved ones, the appetites of the body, the love of life itself, all that makes even a converted man live unto himself, for his own comfort or advantage, for his own advancement, even for his own circle of friends, has to go to the cross. It is no theoretical death, but a real crucifixion with Christ, such as only the Holy Ghost Himself can make actual in the experience of His servant. Both as a crisis and process, Paul's testimony must be made ours: "I have been and still am crucified with Christ." The self must be released from itself to become the agent of the Holy Ghost.

As crucifixion proceeds, intercession begins. By inner burdens, by calls to outward obediences, the Spirit begins to live His own life of love and sacrifice for a lost world through His cleansed channel. We see it in Rees Howells's life. We see it at its greatest height in the Scriptures. Watch Moses, the young intercessor, leaving the palace by free choice to identify himself with his slave-brethren. See him accompanying them through "the waste and howling wilderness". See him reach the very summit of intercession, when the wrath of God was upon them for their idolatry, and their destruction was imminent. It is not his body he now offers for them as intercessor, but his immortal soul: "If Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy Book"; and he actually called this "making an atonement" for them.

See the Apostle Paul, the greatest man of the new dispensation as Moses was of the old. For years his body, through the Holy Ghost, is a living sacrifice, that

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the Gentiles might have the Gospel; finally, his immortal soul is offered on the altar. The very one who was just rejoicing with the Romans that nothing could separate him and them from the love of God (Rom. 8), says a moment later, the Spirit bearing him witness, that he could wish himself "accursed (separated) from Christ for my brethren my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom. 9). This is the intercessor in action. When the Holy Ghost really lives His life in a chosen vessel, there is no limit to the extremes to which He will take him, in His passion to warn and save the lost. Isaiah, that aristocrat, had to go "naked and bare-footed" for three years as a warning to Israel. We can hardly credit such a thing! Hosea had to marry a harlot, to show his people that the heavenly Husband was willing to take back His adulterous bride. Jeremiah was not allowed to marry, as a warning to Israel against the terrors and tragedies of captivity. Ezekiel was not allowed to shed one tear for the death of his wife, "the desire of his eyes". And so the list might be continued. Every greatly used instrument of God has been, in his measure, an intercessor: Wesley for backsliding England; Booth for the down-and-outs; Hudson Taylor for China; C. T. Studd for the unevangelized world.

But intercession is more than the Spirit sharing His groanings with us, and living His life of sacrifice for the world through us. It is the Spirit gaining His ends of abundant grace. If the intercessor knows identification and agony, he also knows authority. It is the law of the corn of wheat and the harvest: "if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit". Intercession is not substitution for sin. There has only ever been one substitute for a world of sinners, Jesus the Son of God. But intercession so identifies the intercessor with the sufferer that it gives him a prevailing place with God. He moves God. He

even causes Him to change His mind. He gains his objective, or rather the Spirit gains it through him. Thus Moses, by intercession, became the saviour of Israel and prevented their destruction; and we can have little doubt that Paul's supreme act of intercession for God's chosen people resulted in the great revelation given him at that time, of world-wide evangelization and the final salvation of Israel (Romans 10 and 11), and is enabling God to bring it about.

Mr. Howells would often speak of "the gained position of intercession", and the truth of it is obvious on many occasions in his life. It is a fact of experience. The price is paid, the obedience is fulfilled, the inner wrestlings and groanings take their full course, and then "the word of the Lord comes". The weak channel is clothed with authority by the Holy Ghost and can speak the word of deliverance. "Greater works" are done. Not only this, but a new position in grace is gained and maintained, although, even then, that grace can only be appropriated and applied in each instance under the direct guidance of the Spirit. Mr. Howells used to speak of it, in Mr. Müller's phrases, as entering "the grace of faith", in contrast to receiving "the gifts of faith". What he meant was that, when we pray in a normal way, we may hope that God of His goodness will give us the thing. If He does, we rejoice; it is His gift to us; but we have no power or authority to say that we can always get that same answer at any time. Such are the gifts of faith. But when an intercessor has gained the place of intercession in a certain realm, then he has entered into "the grace of faith"; along that special line the measureless sea of God's grace is open to him. That is the gained place of intercession.

Mr. Howells referred to George Müller's experience. Mr. Müller had never gained a place of intercession

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over sickness, but on one occasion God raised up a sick person for whom he had prayed. On another occasion, he prayed for another sick person, but there was no healing. Mr. Müller, however, said that this was not a failure in prayer, because he had never gained a place of intercession over sickness, and therefore the answer to the first prayer was merely "a gift of faith", which would not necessarily be repeated. On the other hand, he had gained a place of intercession for the orphans. He was always ready to be the first sufferer on their behalf; if there was enough food for all except one, he would be the one to go without; and in this realm of supply, God held him responsible to see that the needs were always met, for the doors of God's Treasury had been permanently opened to him, and he could take as much as he needed.

Pastor Blumhardt of Germany, on the other hand, was a man who had gained a place of intercession for the sick. In his first struggles with evil spirits, it took him more than eighteen months of prayer and fasting, before he gained the final victory. Complaints were lodged against him of neglecting his work as a minister and devoting himself to the healing of the sick, but he said the Lord had given the parable of the friend at midnight and the three loaves, and, though unworthy, he was going on knocking. He prayed through, and God did open. Not only were hundreds blessed, but he raised a standard for the church. After the final victory he gained such ease of access to the Throne that often, when letters came asking for prayer for sick people, after just looking up for a single moment, he could find God's will as to whether they were to be healed or not. The sufferings of others became so painful to him that he was pleading for them as if for himself. That was intercession.

## *Chapter Thirteen*

### CHALLENGING DEATH

**E**VEN IN THE FACE OF THIS APPARENT FAILURE WITH the consumptive woman, Mr. Howells knew that he had gained the position of intercession. He needed no proof himself, but was certain that the Lord would set an outward seal to the inner victory. It came a few months later. He was called in to see a man in the village who was dying. He found him already unconscious. His wife was sobbing her heart out, for there were ten children, and he was the only bread-winner. The effect on Mr. Howells was immediate. The suffering of the woman came on him as if it were his own sister; he went out into a field and wept, and, as he said, "Once you weep, or the Holy Ghost in you, you are the very one to touch the Throne."

He knew the only way to help her was to bring her husband back to her, but the man was beyond human aid. However, it seemed as if the Lord made him enter into her feelings to the point where her sufferings became his own, and her need his responsibility. God is "a Father of the fatherless", and "relieveth the widow"; so he knew that, unless he could prevail for the husband, the Holy Ghost would insist on taking that place through him, and he would be responsible to provide for this woman and support her children.

He returned to the woman's house and was sitting there, waiting for her to come downstairs, when he heard a voice speaking on a plane that seemed new to

him, and saying, "He is not to die; he is to live." "The stillness that came into that room!" said Mr. Howells. "It was the stillness that God makes when He is there." The wife came down and he immediately said to her, "Since I last saw you, a great burden of prayer has been on me for your husband, and the Lord has told me he is not to die; he is to live." But she was not convinced. He could see that she hadn't taken it from him, and there was every natural reason for this; there was her husband's condition, and then the fact that the last person Mr. Howells had said would be healed, had so recently died.

He left her and returned home. But as he was crossing the common, the Lord began to speak to him again, and said, "You didn't speak to that woman in the way you do say things when you are really certain. To-morrow morning early you must go back and tell her again, and go without doubting." It was such a strong confirmation that, as he went to bed, he declared out loud, "I'm returning to-morrow to challenge death, and say to it, 'You will not take this man'."

As he had a train to catch the next morning at eight o'clock, he started out before six for the two-mile walk to the village. It was snowing and pitch dark, and the Evil One attacked him all the way. "It was as though legions of devils were withstanding me," he said. "I felt like a man walking against the tide, and the enemy kept saying, 'The man died as soon as you left last night'." It was a severe test of faith, but after battling his way through, as he got near the house "it was sweet to see the light". When he entered, he said to the woman, "I don't blame you for not taking what I told you yesterday. I didn't say it to you with the certainty with which I tell things that I know, but I have come over this morning to tell you now that your husband will

not die; and as a proof of what I say, if he should die, I will support you and your children." She brightened visibly, as she really took it from him this time, and he returned in great joy, very differently from the way he had come. "It seemed as though heaven had come down to rejoice, and I knew death could never take him. There was no death there," he said.

He was away for two days during which he refused to take note of the enemy's attacks. As he was returning, the devil still kept at it, telling him they would be waiting to give him the news that the man had died, and to ask him to speak at the funeral! When he arrived at the station, some of the believers were waiting for him, and one called out, "He is out of danger. The moment you left the house he changed for the better!"

The next case was harder. It was a woman who was one of their best converts, in whose home they held cottage meetings. She was the wife of one, William Davies, and sister-in-law to the consumptive woman. She was dangerously ill after the birth of a child, and the doctor had given no hope of her recovery. When Mr. Howells went to the home, they were all crying. "Do you know the Lord's will?" was William Davies's first eager question. "He hasn't revealed it yet," he answered, "but I don't believe He would take her without telling me." That was the first ray of light. There was no time for delay, and William in his anxiety pressed him further. "Do you think He will speak to-day?" "I believe He will," he reassured him. "I'll walk home now, and I am sure He will speak to me."

The vital question, of course, was: What was God's will? Even though an intercession had been gained, the Lord's will must be revealed in each case; and in this one the very fact that he wanted her to live could sway his judgment. Only the impartial can find God's will, as

the Saviour said in John 5 : 30. On that two-mile walk God always talked with His servant. "I have called you friends" was no idle theory to him, but a precious and practical relationship. He always expected the Master to share these secrets with him. So as they walked that day, the Lord's word came to him again, "She will be healed and not die." "The moment I heard it," Rees said, "I had the joy of healing."

He returned in the early afternoon, because every minute counted. He could even joke with William Davies a bit now. "If I tell you God's will, will you believe me? If you do, and I tell you your wife is to get well, mind there are no more tears! If you want to cry, you had better cry now before I tell you!" "The Holy Ghost was in that house," Mr. Howells said, "and I knew He had conquered death. Naturally speaking, death was in the room, but I was in perfect peace. We got down and prayed, about six of the children joining us. What a praise meeting we had, and she changed for the better that day!"

Through the position gained in his intercession for the consumptive woman, God's servant had become sensitive to His voice in cases of sickness in a way that he had never been before. It had been a long spiritual climb in her case, but now he found that in a moment he could take the word of the Lord. He had so many of these cases at that time that it looked as if this would be his special ministry; and he often said from that period, that he believed a new era of healing would break forth in the Christian church. Perhaps only eternity will reveal how much the Spirit's intercession and believing through him has contributed to the revival of spiritual healing which has been witnessed in many parts of the church in recent years.

## *Chapter Fourteen*

### A FATHER TO ORPHANS

WHEN THE CONSUMPTIVE WOMAN DIED, SHE LEFT four little children. It was such a test for her husband that he fell into bad habits through drink, and much neglected them. Mr. Howells one day was burdened about this, and the Lord showed him plainly that something would have to be done for these children. He asked him what He should do with them, and Mr. Howells gave Him no reply. He said, "Unless you give Me an answer, they will have to go to the workhouse." Then He asked him, "If anything happened to your brother or sister-in-law, would you allow their children to go there?" "Certainly I wouldn't," answered Mr. Howells. "Why do you answer Me so quickly about your own folk," the Lord said, "yet you have nothing to say about these four little orphans?" "Well, of course, blood is thicker than water." "Yes, but spirit is thicker than blood!"

Things came to a crisis when the father went away and left the children. Mr. Howells's first thought was that he would make himself responsible for them, as a guardian, and pay a woman to go to the house to look after them. That was more than many would have done, but the Lord said to him, "It is a father they need—not a guardian. I am a Father of the fatherless, but I cannot be a Father to them in heaven, so I must be one through you."

He had to face up to what that would mean—to make

a home with them and earn enough to keep them until the youngest was of age. It would mean fifteen to twenty years of his life going, and all the hopes he had of one day taking the message of the Holy Ghost to the world. Moreover, they were not his children; he had not got a father's love for them, and there was nothing in him that wanted to do it.

It was the first test on the reality of his position as a martyr, and it came suddenly against him. It was on this that the Spirit challenged him. He was to have taken the mother's place in consumption and death. But the Lord had taken her and brought him back as a "living martyr". If that was real, then he must take her place now in caring for her four little ones. There was no answer to that, and he dare not question the authority of the Holy Ghost in his life. "But," he said, "you must have God's nature to love other people's children as your own." So he told the Lord, "I am willing for You to be a Father through me, but I cannot do it unless You love them through me, so that they are not like adopted, but begotten children. And to do that, You will have to change my nature."

Really he never thought God could do it, but He did. One night by his bedside he found God's love pouring into him—His love for the fatherless. There were no bounds to it. It went out towards those four little children—nothing now could stop him going to live with them. He felt that they had a claim on him. He put it this way, "Any child without parents has a claim on God to be a Father to him, so these four orphans had a claim on the Holy Spirit who was to be a Father to them through me." But divine love could not be limited to four. He said, "I felt I loved every little child in the world that had no one to look after it. It was the love of God flowing through me."

'He arranged for someone to look after the children temporarily while he made all preparations to go and live with them. It was no test to him now, but all joy. However, on the very day that he was to go, three sisters of their mother said they would like to take them and give them a home. The Lord showed him that that was His provision for them, but that he had gained the position of "a father to the orphans".

The proof of the reality of this was to be seen in the coming years. No one could live with Mr. Howells in his later days in the Bible College and see him and Mrs. Howells taking and loving children of missionaries and Jewish refugee children, some in their own home, and many in the happy home for missionaries' children near by, without realizing the extent to which God had indeed given them the father and mother heart, which could gather, not four, but seventy, under their wings.

Commenting later on this, Mr. Howells said: "The place of intercession gained at that time holds good to-day. There was no need for the Lord to test it over again, unless there had been indifference or backsliding. From that gained position, one can continually pray for the orphans, and ask the Lord to be a Father to them even through others, because one only asks Him to do through another what he is willing for the Lord to do through him. That is the law of intercession on every level of life, that only so far as we have been tested and proved willing to do a thing ourselves, can we intercede for others. Christ is an Intercessor, because He took the place of each one prayed for. We are never called to intercede for sin, that has been done once and for all; but we are often called to intercede for sinners and their needs, and the Holy Ghost can never 'bind the strong man' through us on a higher level than that in which

He has first had victory in us. 'It cannot drive the world, until itself be driven.' "

In a wonderful way the Lord also used Mr. Howells to reveal His love to the father who had deserted the children. For over sixteen years, since he had been a boy, Mr. Howells had paid money into the Rechabites Sick Benefit Club, but the Lord now told him that he was not to keep his payment up any longer. "As the Lord had the ownership of the money," said Mr. Howells, "I could not use it without His permission. The devil was busy warning me that I would have no provision for a rainy day, and, in plain language, my end would be in the workhouse—and all my life I had dreaded even the name of that place!" But the Lord made him stand to one Scripture: "He that gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack" (2 Cor. 8 : 15), so the Rechabite Club had "to go to the altar", nor was he allowed to put in a claim for the amounts already paid.

But three months after the man had deserted his children and had also been compelled to leave the district through a sin he had committed, Mr. Howells was guided, strangely enough, to pay the arrears on the man's Sick Benefit Club, and thereafter to keep it up to date. It was a surprising guidance, for if it had been wrong for him to pay his own Club money, how could it be right to pay this man's? But the Holy Ghost revealed that the wrong for him had not been in paying the Club, but in the motive he had in maintaining his payments. God had called him to the school of faith, and therefore, for him, the position of faith once gained would be a complete substitute for the Club against the workhouse. "But it was equally clear," said Mr. Howells, "that we cannot say a thing is wrong for others, just because we have been called to give it up;

it depends on our position or grade in life." So he paid this man's Club, and no one else knew about it.

He never heard a word from the man till about five months later, when he had a letter from him saying that he was laid up in bed with consumption and had had a severe haemorrhage. For two weeks he had struggled with himself to go on his knees and ask the Lord for forgiveness, but he was too much ashamed to do so, because he had dishonoured "the blessed Name". But one Sunday morning the Salvation Army workers came in front of the house where he was staying, and while they were singing, he got out of bed, went on his knees, and received forgiveness and peace. He was now writing to say how sorry he was that he had yielded to temptation and disgraced the mission through the sin into which he had fallen, and asked the friends to forgive him, since the Lord had done so. He had no money to pay his lodgings, but the doctor had arranged for him to be taken to the workhouse the following week. When the man heard what Mr. Howells had done for him, the love of God broke him down. Instead of the workhouse, he was taken to his father's home, and had a guinea a week for five months, until he passed peacefully away into the presence of the Lord; and his little ones had £38 after his death. The incident had a great effect on the village, and was also a proof to His servant that the Lord could not only keep him out of the workhouse, but also keep others through him, if he gave perfect obedience to the Holy Spirit.

In all these experiences the Lord had a twofold purpose—the blessing of the needy and the transformation of His servant. "The Holy Ghost took me through grade after grade," he said. "The process of changing one's natures (replacing self nature by the divine nature) was very slow and bitter. It was a daily dying and

showing forth the life of Christ, but that life was the life of a victim. Christ was the greatest Victim this side of the Cross, but the greatest Victor on the other; and the daily path was the way of the Cross: every selfish motive and every selfish thought was at once dealt with by the Holy Spirit. In my boyhood days the strictest man I knew was my schoolmaster, but how often I said that the Holy Ghost was a thousand times more strict—the schoolmaster could only judge by actions, but the Holy Ghost was judging by the motive.”

One evening, for instance, when his friend and he were speaking in the open air, the friend preached first, and the Holy Ghost so used him that Mr. Howells began to wonder how he would ever preach after him (he was not a gifted open-air speaker), and that grew into a thought of jealousy. “No one knew it,” he said, “but that night the Holy Ghost whipped me and humbled me to the dust. He showed me the ugliness of it and how the devil would take advantage of such a thing to damage the souls of those people. I never saw a thing I hated more than that, and I could have cursed myself for it. ‘Didn’t you come out to the open air for these souls to be blessed?’ He said. ‘And if so, what difference does it make through whom I bless them?’ He told me to confess the sin to my friend, and if ever He found it in me again, I would have to make a public confession. From that day on I have not dared to cherish a thought of jealousy, because not once did the Holy Ghost go back on His word to me. Whatever warning of punishment He had given me, if I disobeyed, I had to pay the full penalty. A person might think it was a life of bondage and fear. It would be to the flesh, but to the new man in Christ it was a life of fullest liberty. At first I had a tendency to pity myself and grumble at the penalty for disobedience, but as I saw that I must either

lose this corrupt self here or bear the shame of its exposure hereafter, I began to side with the Holy Spirit against myself, and looked on the stripping as a deliverance rather than a loss."

## *Chapter Fifteen*

LORD RADSTOCK

AT THE LLANDRINDOD CONVENTION IN AUGUST 1909, Mr. Howells again met his friend, Mr. John Gosset, with whom he had had the correspondence about the New Year card. Hearing him speak in one of the meetings on prayer and intercession, Mr. Gosset was so blessed that he told his friend Lord Radstock about it. As a result, Mr. Howells was asked by him to address a special meeting of believers. He told them what he had proved in his experience of the difference between a prayer warrior and an intercessor, and the points he stressed are worth recording, though touched on in a previous chapter.

A prayer warrior can pray for a thing to be done without necessarily being willing for the answer to come through himself; and he is not even bound to continue in the prayer until it is answered. But an intercessor is responsible to gain his objective, and he can never be free till he has gained it. He will go to any lengths for the prayer to be answered through himself. But once a position of intercession has been gained, tested and proved, the intercessor can claim all the blessings on that grade, whenever it is God's will for him to do so. It is the same as in Euclid, Mr. Howells pointed out: up to the grade a person has learnt the propositions, he can do the riders on them, but not any farther, and there is never need to go over the same ground twice, unless he is uncertain of them.

During his address Mr. Howells also touched on divine healing, and told of the Lord's dealings with him over the consumptive woman: how the first gained case had to go to the altar, because the first-fruits belong to God; and how, although the Holy Spirit witnessed in him that he had gained it, he had to walk it as a failure; and how through that the Lord gave such a sentence of death to the flesh, that in all future cases of healing self would take no glory.

In telling this, he had no idea that Lord Radstock had been led the same way. The story was afterwards recorded in his biography. He had accepted the truth of divine healing, through James 5 : 15, "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up", and pledged himself to act on it; indeed he believed the Church's neglect of this command was the cause of much suffering. After he had taken this stand, his eldest daughter fell seriously ill. He had many doctors among his religious friends, but felt led to refuse their help, yet in spite of his faith in God's word, "heaven was silent and the child died" Standing over her death-bed, he was enabled to say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." It was a tremendous test to his faith, and caused him great personal agony, but out of the affliction he came forth more than a conqueror, and was afterwards used in hundreds of cases of divine healing. However, he had never understood why his daughter had died, until he heard Mr. Howells. He took immediate hold on the word about the first-fruits going to the altar; but it made him wonder how the Lord had been able to reveal these laws to His young servant. It made such an impression on him that he told Rees Howells God had given him light which should be passed on to the church of Christ, and as a university training would be an advantage, he would like him to go to College at his

expense. He also took him to see many of his friends and asked him to repeat this same point to them. But as Mr. Howells said concerning God's claim on the first-fruits: "Only a person near it would see it."

Mr. Gosset was so pleased with the result of the visit that he told Rees he would like him to meet many of his friends in London including Sir Robert Anderson, the Postmaster General, and so he invited him to come up as his guest. This was the opening of a new door—for the young miner to meet "people of rank"! As he said, "Nothing pleased the natural man better than that, and my first thought was, You don't know where all this will end. New openings were coming from many directions, but this one pleased me more than any, and I had some secret satisfaction in making it known to my friends. When I told them at home, they too were very pleased, and thought it would be the finish of this strange life, the plain food and so on! Outwardly it was a great honour to be asked to speak on prayer and intercession to such men as Lord Radstock and Sir Robert Anderson, but I little thought what a great lesson the Lord had to teach me through it."

## *Chapter Sixteen*

### **CALLED TO A HIDDEN LIFE**

**A**BOUT A MONTH AFTER RECEIVING THE INVITATION from Mr. Gosset, there came a new call to intercession. Although many drunkards in the village had been gloriously converted, there were some men that they failed to get through. They attended the meetings and showed a desire to follow the Lord, but were such terrible slaves to drink that the enemy still kept his hold on them. There was a need once again to "bind the strong man and spoil his goods". Actually the intercession proved to be the first step away from a public ministry into a hidden life.

For three years, after his day's work was done, Rees Howells had been at the mission every night. There were meetings five evenings a week, and the other two were spent in visiting. His work in the pit took him from 7 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., and then he had the two-mile walk each way in all weathers. There was no time to attend any other meetings, for he hardly ever left his flock, except during the week of the Llandrindod Convention to which they took as many of the new converts as possible. The work had become so well established that many people were coming in from the surrounding districts on Sunday evenings, and it was like a continuous revival. The outward effect on the village had been that, whereas three years before the brewery was sending up two wagons and a cart loaded with barrels of beer every fortnight on pay days, it had now come

down to one cart, and that only half full. It was a common joke that it would have paid the brewery to have persuaded Rees Howells and his friends to become shareholders! "The only enemy we had," said Mr. Howells, "was the devil himself! All the people respected us, for they knew we were out for their welfare. Although inwardly we were often going through trials and testings, they were never told of these; it was a perpetual revival with them. Oh, how precious the Name of Jesus was to us! In the open-air meetings, the district rang with 'Blessed be the Name of the Lord'."

The difficulty Mr. Howells had was to find time for prayer. Really his only opportunity was on that two-mile walk to the mission, one mile of which was over a lonely common. He always tried to be alone for that mile, and, after leaving the last house behind, would remove his cap, and continue in the attitude of prayer. The conventions of those days made it an unheard-of thing not to wear a head covering when out of doors, but when alone, the presence of God was so real that he always bared his head. This became so much a habit that he never once crossed the common without putting his cap in his pocket, and when returning late at night, after the lights in the town were put out, he would go the whole way like that. But curious though it may seem to us to-day, nothing would have induced him to go hatless in the day-time! As he said, "The hatless brigade was unknown at that time!"

This apparently trivial habit was the first thing the Spirit used to make him dead to the influence of the public. One Sunday morning very early, he was with the Lord in prayer, he said, "and the glory of that morning was far brighter than the light of the sun. There was such a peace and solemn hush that I felt the place was holy ground. I had felt it sometimes before,

but it was far more intense that morning, as though Isaiah's words had become a fact: 'And the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days.' The Lord then showed me that the place of abiding in the intercession to which He had called me, was to keep in the attitude of prayer all day. For the first time I could not take my hat with me! To walk through the town, to go to the mission would be impossible, I could never do it! *Never!* The glory soon passed away, and the sun had no more light than usual, if anything less, and oh, the darkness that came over me! How I wished I had not gone out that morning. Even fasting was not to be compared with this. Only those at home were involved in the test of fasting, but in this thing I was to be a spectacle before the whole town. Never had they seen a man out of doors without a hat!"

When the time for the mission came, the Holy Ghost told him he was not to go unless he obeyed. While he was on his knees, the Lord asked him his reasons for not wanting to obey. Did he want to go out of the Lord's presence? No, it wasn't that. The only reason he could give was that the influence of the public would be too great over him, and he wouldn't be able to stand it; so the Lord told him that was the very reason why He had asked him to do it, and he was not to preach again on being dead to the world, until he had victory over it. "How much of the world is in us, when we often think we are dead to it!" commented Mr. Howells. "I used to laugh about a man who had put the Salvation Army cap on, but I wished that day that the Holy Ghost would allow me to wear even that! But He would allow no compromise. I had to say, 'I am a bonds slave, You pull me through'."

He thought if he could avoid his mother, he would not mind so much, because this, on top of the fasting, would

be sure to make her think that something was wrong with him, and he would go to any lengths to avoid hurting her feelings. Their family was well known and highly respected in the town, and the thought of disgracing his parents made the test doubly hard. "I was upstairs praying," he said, "trying to get as much strength as possible, but the Lord seemed to be very far away. Often in a test it seems that there is no God in the world."

His mother knew he was later than usual and heard him coming downstairs. She came to meet him with his hat in her hand, brushing it for him with a mother's loving care. "When I told her I was not wearing a hat," he said, "I thought of old Simeon's words to Mary, 'A sword shall pierce through thine own soul also'. What it means for parents to see one of their sons walking on a strange path!

"I shall never forget going through the town that day, and passing people going to other churches. Talk about being dead to the world! Every sensitive nerve in me was alive to its influence! I was not much better than a blind man. It seemed that the devil had gathered all the forces of hell to attack this simple obedience. In itself there was nothing in it; I was only called to spend the day in the attitude of prayer, and that meant a little separation from the world. Oh, the depths of this respectable self-nature—but it was in the process of being changed for the divine nature! It was a deliverance to reach the mission. It was like the City of Refuge from the avenger of blood, and among ourselves there was always a laugh after a test."

But it was not only on Sundays the attitude of prayer was to be maintained. "Whether working, walking or anything else," the souls for whom he was praying were to be upon his heart; so that meant going every

day without his hat. "To an extent I had victory over that," he said, "but it was a real death to go to work without it; however, it had now become harder to disobey than to obey, and the people became used to it."

In separating him to Himself, the Lord was preparing to take him much farther than this. He was going to call him away from public ministry altogether, and the next step came through an attack of the enemy on his special friend and co-worker in the mission. They loved each other and "by nature," said Mr. Howells, "he was one of the most lovable persons I had ever met, and like Apollos, he was eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures." But the enemy, through some believers, began to tell him that as long as he remained with Rees Howells in the village, he would never be at his best. He needed to have a work of his own. The Lord showed Mr. Howells the seriousness of this attack, and that he was the only one who could save his friend: "The only way you can do it is by giving him the very thing the enemy says he will never get. Why don't you give the leadership of the mission to him? Retire behind him and be an intercessor for him. Pray that the mission will be a greater success in his hands than in yours." And He reminded him that this was one of the very things He had spoken to him about years before at Llandrindod.

He had to face the effect it would have on his life. "For three years I had put all my time, money and everything into the mission," he said, "and had been over every night. And now, when there were great prospects, He was asking me to step down and help behind my friend, as he had previously helped behind me. The mission was growing, and would become still more popular, and the people naturally would attribute all the success to my friend; they would never see nor

remember that it needed someone to put down the foundation. It was a great inward conflict to allow my friend to get the outward success. This was the next grade of self the Holy Ghost was going to deal with; and it was a hard process, allowing it to be replaced by His divine nature. For three days I could not willingly accept it, but I knew I would be pulled through. It was God's way of working one up to having as much joy in a hidden life as in an open and successful one. If my aim in life was to do God's will, then I could truly say either way would be equal joy." He was helped at that time by the story of Madame Guyon, where the process of sanctification was to be seen very plainly. Even in the dungeon she would say, "I ask no more, in good or ill, but union with Thy holy will."

God brought him through and made another deep change in his nature. Like Jonathan, he was able to love the man who took his place. He talked it over with his friend and told him how God was leading him, and that from henceforth the mission would be his, while he stood behind him in prayer: "Build it as a great mission. The Lord will win souls through you, and I will be praying for you. I want the mission to become a greater success through you than it was through me."

## *Chapter Seventeen*

### THE HATLESS BRIGADE

**S**HORTLY AFTER MR. HOWELLS HAD HANDED OVER THE mission to his friend, the anticipated letter came from London asking him to go up the following week to be Mr. Gosset's guest. His first thought was that he couldn't go, because he had been called to gain this new place of intercession, and it would take three months. He went to bed feeling he had made a real sacrifice, but the next morning the Lord asked him. "Why are you not going to London?" "Because of my intercession." "Why, can't you intercede in London?" The Holy Spirit would always probe down to the very root of the self He wanted to get at. "Tell Me your real reason for not going," He said. Mr. Howells had to confess that it was because he could not face going to London without his hat. "I had victory over being without one at home," he said, "but going to London like that to be the guest of people of rank was out of the question. I knew Mr. Gosset would never allow me to insult him. I was sensitive to other people's feelings, and, after his kindness, I would have refused any amount of money rather than do that. The hundred and one excuses the flesh made! But the Holy Ghost would have none of them. He had planned all this to prove whether I would obey Him rather than man. People say very flippantly sometimes that it is an honour to be a fool for Christ's sake, but it is quite

another thing actually to be called to do it by the Holy Ghost."

The conflict was sharp. It even came into his mind momentarily whether it was possible to turn back from "this life of surrender, this bondslave life, this daily dying, and just live an ordinary Christian life, and preach the Gospel and help the poor," as many of his friends did. But the Spirit held him to the reality of his "living martyr" position, with no more claim on his life down here than a dead man has. There was some questioning, as there always was until he actually came up to becoming one with the Holy Ghost in what He was doing, but he knew he had no choice in the matter, and he would not dare show any real unwillingness, lest he should forfeit the privilege of his martyr position.

The Spirit "who never pushes" drew him with the cords of love, by showing him the bitter cross the Lord bore. As the Scripture says: "He had no form nor comeliness; He was despised and rejected of men, smitten of God and afflicted." "In the mission," said Mr. Howells, "we used to sing:

Where He leads me I will follow...  
I'll go with Him through the Garden,  
I'll go with Him all the way.

But what a bitter struggle it was to go with Him now! I asked Him to show me through the Scriptures that He had called His servants to do this kind of thing before, in case Mr. Gosset and his friends asked me to give them Scripture for what I was doing. If He did that, then I said I would go. Like a flash He brought before me John the Baptist and Elijah: the one clothed only in a garment of camel's hair and his food locusts and wild honey, the other spending three and a half years

between a cave and a widow's home, where they were eating the last meal every day. This had been their way of the cross to power.

"The Lord would always corner me, and then I would laugh and say, 'Yes, Lord, You pull me through.' So I gave in, but this time I had grumbled a little, and when He reminded me of John the Baptist, I was afraid He might send me to London without something more than a hat! So I kept myself busy all that day, in case He would add a little more to the obedience."

The day came to go to London. His mother had become used to his being without a hat in his own home town, but she had it ready and well brushed that morning. That was the first test! The devil also suggested to him that it would be better to take a cap in his pocket in case it rained; but he had to say that an umbrella would be more appropriate!

When the train was steaming into Paddington, he said he felt like a man going to the scaffold! Mr. Gosset was there to meet him and gave him a royal welcome as he stepped out of the carriage. Then he put his head into the compartment and said, "You have left your hat behind." "No, I didn't bring one with me." "What! Coming to London without a hat! Oh dear no! You must realize, Rees, that you are not in the country now. You cannot come to London without a hat." "Then I must go back." "It is not a question of going back," Mr. Gosset replied; "it is a question of wearing a hat."

"I never pitied any man as I did my host," said Mr. Howells, "when we drove from Paddington to Piccadilly in an open cab. He was as red as a lobster. On the way he said, 'I have a new cap at home, and it is a very expensive one; it does not fit me, and I will give it you.' I had to tell him then, that if I were given all the caps in London for wearing one that side of Christ-

mas, I would not take them, because to go without a hat was one of my positions of abiding to gain a place of intercession. He told me afterwards that his pride had never been touched as it was then. The Lord had tried to reach it before, but he would not allow anyone to get near it. He said he had blushed more during that drive than in all his lifetime before."

If the cap had aroused such conflict, what about the fasting and plain food? What would he think of "Daniel's menu"? While waiting for the meal, he read out to Mr. Howells all the invitations to dinner. "What a burden came over me!" Rees said. "Another stand had to be made. I knew I could only take two meals a day of the simplest food, so what was the use of the dinners? I didn't say a word; I could never speak until I was compelled to, and I didn't have too much strength to tell it even then! The bell went and we sat down to dinner. 'All this has been prepared for you,' he said, 'and I want you to taste everything on the table.' Then I had to confess that for the next three months I was only to take two meals a day, of bread and cheese and soup! He put both hands up, and exclaimed, 'What have you done with me, Rees? Who will they say my guest is? One of the old prophets?' We both had a great laugh, and I told him the test it had been to me to obey the Lord and go to London.. I told him that to insult him after all his kindness was more than I had bargained for when I took my place of abiding. 'To think you are doing all this to reach lost souls,' was his reply, 'and here I am now an old man, and I have done practically nothing to reach them.' Then he told me, 'Don't disobey God even if the king should invite you to dinner'; but at the same time he said, 'I can't walk with you in Piccadilly! You will have to walk two yards in front or two yards behind

me!' We laughed for hours. Such a cross, but such a glorious victory!"

Mr. Gosset took him to visit his friends, and he had "a great welcome and a great time with them all, especially with Lord Radstock and Sir Robert Anderson. The Lord was testing me to see whether that class of society would touch me, and I could say I was dead to it all."

But only on the last day did God's real purpose in the visit come to light. The night before he left, Mr. Gosset came to his room, and said, "God has revealed something to me. He has told me He is going to bless my house because you are here, as He blessed the house of Obed-edom, because the Ark of God was there." As he spoke, Mr. Howells said, "The place was filled with God, I could hardly stand it." The next morning, the Lord led Mr. Howells to read about the Shunammite woman, and to say to Mr. Gosset, "Do you know you have done exactly the same to me as that woman did to the prophet? And I, too, am to ask, 'What is to be done for thee?' Any blessing you would like from God He is going to give you." He broke down and wept. He had one great desire, he said; that his son in the army, Captain Ralph Gosset, who had left the paths in which he was brought up, and was returning from Africa, should not bring discredit on the family. "God will do more than that," answered Mr. Howells. "He will not return to the army without being a converted man." It was to be a fulfillment of the Saviour's word to the seventy: "Whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it."

## *Chapter Eighteen*

### THE VOW OF A NAZARITE

THE PATH OF INTERCESSION THAT MR. HOWELLS WAS following now took on a new definiteness and began to go steeply upwards. The hard cases on whose account he had been called back for further intercession had all been in the village and under his personal influence. But in Mr. Gosset's son there was a soul whom he had never seen, and probably would never meet, whom he had no possible means of influencing, except by way of the Throne. The Lord said to him. "This will be the test case of your intercession." It was evident that the Lord had been preparing His servant to gain a much higher position than he had realized, and for this he was going to be turned aside from his work among men to deal only with God. The prayer was made quite definite by being written on a card, signed by both Mr. Gosset and himself, of which they each kept a copy. Mr. Howells counted it as one of the most precious things in his possession.

On returning from London, as part of his abiding, he was called to be on his knees for three hours every evening, from 6 to 9 p.m., after he had returned from the mine. He saw how the Lord was preparing for this when a few weeks before He had him give up the leadership of the mission to his friend. Now he was called to give up all spiritual activities outside, and he was not even to attend meetings in the mission. He was to read the Bible through on his knees, which indeed

29<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1909.

89, PICCADILLY. W.

It is the desire of my heart that  
Ralph should be converted -  
and Rees Howells is in full  
sympathy and has agreed to  
take the place of intercession  
for this great mercy - it is our  
desire that he will be converted  
before his return from leave -  
Rees Howells J. J. Goffe

was the way he always read it, and the Holy Ghost would be his Teacher. "It took a little time before I could learn to be absolutely quiet in His presence," he said. "I had been so used to preaching, that whenever I had new light on the Word, I was apt to preach without knowing it, although there were no people there! I had to pull myself up all the time." The initial conditions of the abiding were: (1) Fasting—two meals a day. (2) Living in the attitude of prayer—which meant being hatless. (3) Giving up all outward work at the mission, and not going to one service. (4) The three hours each evening to be spent on his knees, two in reading the Word, and the last one in waiting before God. He knew there were to be other places of abiding, but they were not yet given.

This life was different indeed from the one he had

been living—to be hidden away, after years of activity. Instead of fellowship with Christians, it was to be only with the Lord. He was not even allowed to make known at home, nor to the wider circle of his friends, that he had given up the mission to his friend and by choice had entered this path of intercession. So a rumour went about that something in the visit to London had been a disappointment, and had caused him to give up the mission and never attend a place of worship.

At first he felt he could never draw such joy from this hidden life as he had in active work. It seemed a great tragedy to him that he was getting much light on the Word, but there was no outlet for it; he even had the idea that God would never allow him to preach again. Another disadvantage was that it was not so easy to pray in the evenings as in the mornings, because the happenings of the day made an impression on his mind, and at first it was difficult to shake them off. "Although we may be away from the presence of people, how hard it is," he used to say, "to silence the voices of self. But after a time the Lord brought me to the place where the moment I shut the door at six o'clock, I left the world outside and had access into the presence of God. It was perfect fellowship. I could truly say, 'So nigh, so very nigh to God, I cannot nearer be; For in the person of His Son, I am as near as He' "

The Lord then told him that he must be open to be taken by Him into any position that the prophets or apostles took. "I saw how the iniquity of the nation was laid upon Ezekiel," he said, "but I wasn't afraid of being tested in food like him. Neither was I afraid of Jeremiah, but I was afraid of Isaiah! There was never a prophet like that man, of royal blood, and one of the

greatest statesmen and writers, but I saw how the Holy Ghost humiliated him in what He called him to do (Isaiah 20). The only comfort I had was that by starting to read at Genesis, it would take me about two months before I reached him! But much sooner than that I reached something else, and I couldn't escape it. I wasn't tested in Genesis, but I came to Numbers 6 : 2-6, 'When either man or woman separate themselves to vow the vow of a Nazarite . . . all the days of the vow of his separation, there shall no razor come upon his head . . . he shall be holy and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow . . . he shall come at no dead body.' And the Holy Ghost said to me, 'For the period of this intercession you are to live like this. If your father or mother die, you are not to go near them, and on no account are you to use a razor.'

"I told the Lord it would be far better to die than to do this. I was just thirty years old, and one of six brothers who had all lived a most respectable life, and I knew they would never allow a thing like that at home. To go without a hat was bad enough, but this was a thousand times worse. I thought that every man who grew a beard at least trimmed it every week, but a Nazarite could not touch his hair or beard. And the devil whispered, 'At this rate, in six months it will be down to your knees, and the only place fit for you will be the asylum. It would not be so bad if you only went there yourself, but the worst of it is, you will send your parents there also.'

"I told the Holy Spirit I knew of no one who had been called to do such a thing in this generation, and how could I ever give in to it? But, as always, He insisted in getting at the real reason for unwillingness. Excuses would never do for Him. 'Tell Me the truth,' He said, 'why are you not willing to walk like Samuel

and John the Baptist?' 'Because of my parents,' I answered. 'Do You mean me to put them in the grave or in an asylum?' And I really thought this was the reason. But the Lord said, 'Put your parents on the cross. My mother was in the crowd when I hung on the cross—the greatest Victim the world has ever known. You tell me the real reason why you are not willing to do it.' So I told Him, 'The real reason is that the influence of people will be too strong for me, and I am afraid of being overcome by it.' 'Exactly,' He said. 'And that is the reason why I want you to do it. If there is no world in you, how can the world influence you? Has it ever influenced a dead person? You will be a Nazarite until all that is taken out of you.' He also added, 'Is not a beard anyhow more natural for a man than shaving?' And I had to admit it was. I said one more thing to the Lord: 'It was bad enough for me to take tramps home, but for me to be a tramp—I know my brothers will never live with me. Let me go to lodgings.' But He answered, 'No; you must walk it at home. Before you gain this position, every natural affection, every tender tie must be broken, until the souls of other people become to you the same as the souls of your own.'"

He knew he had to go through with it; it was no use kicking against the pricks. He just had to say, as usual, "Pull me through", and it needed pulling! He had a few days' grace before his people at home or the outside world would notice the absence of the razor. He had to be prepared for the effect upon them. This was all taking place just a few weeks after there seemed such prospects for his life through the invitation to London. Mr. Gosset's father was a personal friend of King Edward VII, and Rees's visit to Mr. Gosset's home was an event in his own father's life; there had

been a notice of it in the local paper, and he knew that it came from his father. It was altogether right for people to see that a person with the Holy Ghost can keep company with lords as well as with tramps! His parents were really proud of him, and looked forward to another opening. In all the strange paths through which he had been led in the previous few months, they had never doubted his sincerity, their only objection was that he allowed things to go too far. But now there was to be this crowning "folly"!

The first thing they noticed was that he did not go out on week nights as usual, and they wondered what was wrong in the mission. Then they saw that he did not come downstairs on Sunday. His father and mother themselves stayed back from chapel that day, and he could hear them whispering downstairs, "What has happened to him? Was he disappointed in his visit to London?" Finally, when they noticed that he had not shaved and was spending all his time in his room, they thought the worst had come! "I drank that cup to the bottom," Mr. Howells said. "It cost me to do this to my parents, and they would have done anything to prevent my being an open failure in the eyes of the public. How I wished I could give a word of explanation! That would have made up for everything; but no, the path was, 'He opened not His mouth'. That was as painful to me as the actual death I was to go through before the outside world.

"It was a great death. It was the talk between every two. The flesh was not to be spared on any point. Many thought my outward appearance was the result of failure, but they could not detect where the failure had come. Even my clothes at that time were enough to make my people ashamed of me, because the Lord had made me give away my best and keep only one

suit. For the first two weeks I did not have victory, and when going to work it was a most painful experience. During the time I walked about with Will Battery those years before, and the people turned round and stared, I used to blush, for I had never seen a man like him—never shaved, hair long, shoes unlaced; and I had thought then, 'I am blushing to walk with him; but supposing I took his place!' It came on me at that time that the Saviour took his place, died his death, and brought all that disgrace on His own earthly family, while I was sensitive and blushed just to be with him. It came to me then, too, 'One day you will have to walk like that'; and as sure as He said it, I was now having to do it. If I only blushed when I passed certain people, He made me walk that same way again. He watched me on every point, until I became as dead as a person who has really died. It was only the value of a lost soul that made me do it."

The criticism he had was not only from the world; much of it was from the religious people. They said they knew he was going too far; they had prophesied this fall and now it had come. It was the experience of Psalm 69:8, "I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children." And the reason is given in the following verse: "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me." Only a very few of the inner circle knew that it was by choice he had taken this way of intercession, and that the Holy Spirit was making him tread himself that very path of shame into which so many drift because of sin. The world thought he was "like the monks, or had taken a silly notion into his head," or that it was the effect of failure and that he had gone out of his mind.

We can only imagine what this meant to Miss Elizabeth Jones, who remained his close spiritual companion, although they had surrendered the hope of marriage. On one occasion, when they were to meet and she was hindered from coming in time, Mr. Howells thought that she had failed at last, and could no longer stand being seen with him, with his long, unkempt hair and beard. But she never failed once. She stood steadily with him right through.

But if at the beginning the world was affecting him, by the end it was he who was affecting the world, for people sensed the presence of God with him, and said so. Even some with no religious faith would take their hats off when they passed him in the streets; and one old man used to tell people, "You mark my words: there goes a modern John the Baptist." An evidence of the effect he had on the district was seen later when a man, who did not know his name, simply asked the ticket collector at the station where "the man with the Holy Ghost" lived, and was directed to Mr. Howells.

He himself said of the test, "In two weeks I had the victory and became dead to the influence of the world. It was as Paul said: 'The slight trouble (affliction) of the passing hour results in a solid glory past all comparison' (2 Cor. 4 : 17 Moff. Trans.). Oh, the glory of that inward life! The three hours in the evening were a time spent in glory; it was nothing less than the Word being illuminated by the Holy Ghost. What perfect peace the Spirit gave me and what love for a lost soul! Up to that time I had always had fear of the searchings of the Holy Spirit, I was afraid of the new places of abiding because I could never refuse them; and while there is the least fear, there is not perfect liberty. People may think they have no fear, when they have never been tested. I thought I would have no fear

## THE VOW OF A NAZARITE

of going against the world and its opinions, and that it was the easiest thing to be dead to it, but it was the greatest error I ever believed. I had to be pulled through inch by inch; it was the process of sanctification, when the self-nature and all its lusts had to be changed for the divine nature (Rom. 6:6; 2 Peter 1:4.) Daily I decreased and He increased. Beyond all that, it was the third heaven with its eternal visions!"

After walking six months as a Nazarite, the Lord gave him the assurance that the intercession had been gained, and he came into wonderful liberty in the presence of God. He went straight to his mother and told her he was free, and that he could shave: at which she was so overjoyed that all she could say again and again was "Thank God!"

In the correspondence over the next few months between him and Mr. Gosset, there were numerous references to this certainty in both their letters. The only immediate indications of the answer were that the son changed his way of life, signed the pledge, left the army and went farming in Canada. It wasn't until twelve years later that Mr. Howells received the news of the full outcome of the intercession. A letter came from Mr. Edgar Faithfull, Secretary of the South Africa General Mission, written on August 3, 1921, from Cape Town, and it said:

My dear Mr. Howells,

You will have heard of the death of Mr. John Gosset on March 12 last, after being ill for one week with pneumonia; his last words were, "The Lord has come." Mr. Pirouet received this news from his son, Ralph Gosset, who goes on to tell of his own conversion. (Did you say, "*Diolch Iddo*"?) An evangelist had been holding meetings

which he and his wife went to. The man spoke on the Prodigal Son, and the words "he came to himself", stuck in Gosset's ears; the next day when ploughing they haunted him. A few days after, he and his wife stood up and testified in the meeting. This is great news, and I know you will be glad to hear it. I believe you gave time to definite prayer for him years ago, and had the assurance your prayer was heard. I believe Ralph Gosset is farming somewhere in Canada.

## *Chapter Nineteen*

### UNCLE DICK'S HEALING

ON THE COMPLETION OF THE SIX MONTHS' INTERCESSION for Captain Gosset by Easter, 1910, Rees Howells was free to go back to a normal life, but the Lord gave him the offer of continuing in a hidden ministry for another four months to gain some other places of intercession, one being for the child widows of India, whose sufferings were so great under the prevailing system. He chose to continue the hidden life, because, he said, "the fellowship I had had with the Lord Himself surpassed all I ever had with man; also I had not finished going through the Bible with the Holy Spirit. The hardest thing in my life had become the sweetest."

The Lord then pointed out to him that these widows were living on only a handful of rice a day, and reminded him of the law of intercession, that before he could intercede for them, he must live like them. So his diet was to be one meal of oats (porridge) every two days, "which the devil was apt to call pigs' food!" He was to give up bread, tea and sugar, and have a pennyworth of milk every two days, the whole costing less than 1s. 6d. a week. The Lord also told him to leave home and live in rooms, as his mother could never have stood his living on so little. He knew fully that before it could be completed, he would have to come to the position where he never wanted to change. Could the Holy Ghost so alter his taste that the food he was now to take would be as satisfying to him as the excellent food he was used to in his own home?

"What pangs of hunger I had," he said afterwards. "The Lord doesn't make it easy for you. He doesn't carry you through on eagle's wings, as it were. The victory is that you come up through it. I remember the feeling I had the first day, when I had no bread at all. I would have given anything for a crust. When you take the place of another, you take the suffering of another, you have to walk every inch of it. As every meal-time came round, there was nothing for me. The wonder is that I didn't go under to it and give in. Only Ezekiel was my friend, and all I could say was, 'How did he do it?' " (Ezek. 4). Nor must it be thought that intercession for Mr. Howells merely meant costly acts of obedience. With his own pangs, there went up a continual cry to God for the relief of the sufferers whose burden he was carrying.

He continued this for ten weeks, and it took ten days to get victory. He saw that the point of fasting is to bring the body into subjection to the Spirit. "Each fast, if carried out under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, means that our bodies become more equipped to carry burdens," He began the day at 5 a.m., with no food all day, then sleeping on the floor, up again at 5 o'clock and going another day without food until 5 p.m. "I would have gone on like that all the days of my life to release those widows of India," he said. And when he did get victory, one meal in two days had become the same to him as having three meals a day. "I knew I was gaining a victory for the Lord," he said, "whereby He could release those widows." It is a significant fact that with India's Independence and new Constitution in 1949, at least a legal change has been made in the laws of inheritance for the benefit of widows, and that a new day has dawned in the general emancipation of women. Who knows what contribution this time of

intercession made to this release, and indeed to the open doors throughout all India to-day for the spread of the Gospel?

In this period of intercession, the final positions of fasting to which God called him were first to one meal every three days, and then to a total fast of fifteen days. By the seventh day of this, he said, "I was going on happily and wasn't touched by it. I was exactly the same the seventh day as on the first. I hadn't exhausted my strength at all and didn't feel the need for food," but the Lord told him then that the intercession was gained and the fasting could finish, although he himself wanted to complete it.

During these final months of intercession, an incident took place which Mr. Howells always considered to be one of the greatest experiences of his life. Up on the Black Mountain, his invalid Uncle Dick was still living at Pentwyn, the grandparents' old home. On New Year's day, before going to visit him, Rees Howells ran upstairs to his room. It was his habit before going out to ask the Lord to shelter him under the Blood and to lead him to anyone who needed his help. But that morning, quite unexpectedly, the Holy Spirit spoke to him: "It is the Father's will to restore your uncle." It seemed "too good to be true, and too great to believe"—that after all these thirty years his uncle should walk again as other men.

When he arrived at Pentwyn, his uncle, who was always eagerly awaiting his weekly visit, asked him the usual question: "Anything new from the Lord?" "Yes," answered Mr. Howells, "and it is about you." "About me!" was the surprised reply. "Have I done anything wrong?" "No, but the Lord has told me that it is His will to heal you." We can only imagine what that news must have sounded like in his ears. All he could say

was that he must go out and see the Lord about it. After a quarter of an hour in the little garden at the back, he returned with his face radiant. "Yes," he said, "I am to be healed in four and a half months, that will be on May 15."

If they had left it indefinite and not committed themselves to a date, it would have been much easier to make known the healing in public, but the point the Holy Spirit pressed home was that it was to be as much of a reality to them then, as it would be to other people after it became a fact. "Faith is the realization of things hoped for, the proof of things not seen" (Heb. 11 : 1. Roth. Trans.). "This was not a case of the fight of faith," said Mr. Howells, "but of standing still and seeing the salvation of the Lord." The intercession had been gained in the long six months' battle for the consumptive woman, and "gaining it once meant gaining the position; it could be used in any other case the Holy Ghost wanted."

So the great news was made known that week, and soon became the talk of the district. Many pitied his uncle and said he had allowed himself to be led astray. Some came to ask why the Lord had said four and a half months, instead of a month or a week or a day. "But those things we did not understand and therefore did not try to explain," said Mr. Howells. "People are always asking 'why?' The only thing that could be said was that 'the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets', and God gave that date."

Two weeks after it was made known, his uncle took a turn for the worse, and was in bed for a month, and people said that instead of being restored, he would be in the grave when the day came! Although he was very ill, the Holy Spirit warned them not to pray. If they did, their prayers would be prayers of doubt. In-

deed the Lord had told his uncle, instead of praying for those ten hours a day, to prepare for the public work that would come to him after the healing.

Two weeks before the date of the healing, the Lord made it known to Mr. Howells that he was to leave home for a few months, and that after telling his uncle, he was not to visit him again until after the healing; because it was not God's will that any man should take praise from it. When he went down to Pentwyn, his uncle asked, with the glory of the Lord on his face, "Has the Lord told you why He said four and a half months, and May 15? It will be Whit-Sunday. And He is healing me in memory of Pentecost. He has told me that I am to be healed at 5 o'clock in the morning and I am to walk to chapel and back (a distance of three miles) for the first time in thirty years!"

As Mr. Howells had been going to visit his uncle every week, and now wasn't to go again, naturally the first thought that would come to everyone's mind was that he had run away and left his uncle in the lurch. "We laughed all day at the greatness of the divine plan," he said, "and our keynote for those last two weeks continued to be, 'Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord with you.'"

On the night before Whit-Sunday, his uncle was as bad as ever. Every night between 1 and 2 a.m. he had to get up, being unable to remain lying down, and he had to do it that morning. It was the last attack of the enemy, who whispered, "It is all up. You are just the same now as any other night, and you have only got three hours." But one minute is quite long enough for the Lord. He went back to bed, and a deep sleep came over him. The next thing he heard was the clock striking five, and he found himself perfectly restored. He called the family up, and there was such a solemn

awe in the house that they were afraid to move, realizing that God Himself had done that great act that very hour. When the time came to walk to church, the devil suggested that he should take a walking stick in case he needed a little support, and he had to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan!"

He arrived at the church, and they had "another cause for thanksgiving on that Thanksgiving Sunday." People from all parts of the district came next day to see him, and the Welsh correspondent of *The Life of Faith*, the Rev. Wynne Evans, wrote an article in that paper about the wonderful healing.

Mr. Howells had invited two of his friends to come a distance of nearly ten miles to have tea with him that Whit-Sunday. They came through his uncle's district, actually passing the chapel he attended in the morning, but heard no news of his healing. Mr. Howells also had had no word. It was a day of testing; and the one topic at the tea-table was: Had Uncle Dick been healed? Although his best friend failed to hold out in his believing, God kept His servant steady until eleven o'clock on Monday night, when some of his friends called out under his window, "It was marvelous to see your uncle in chapel." They thought he knew all about it, as they had sent word to him on Sunday; but the messenger entrusted the giving of the message to another, and it never arrived.

Mr. Howells's comment was, "If I had doubted, would I have rejoiced? The Lord will never give the witness unless we believe; and if we believe, we can afford the delay. To me there was something greater than the healing, it was the further confirmation that the position of intercession had been gained, and could be used in any case where God willed it."

His uncle was appointed a kind of honorary home-

## UNCLE DICK'S HEALING

missionary in the district, and during the next five years visited every house within a radius of three miles over and over again, and opened many a prayer meeting. He walked eighteen miles with his nephew one day, and never had a day's illness after his healing, until the Lord called him home, after telling him that his work on earth was done.

## *Chapter Twenty*

### CALL OUT FROM WAGE-EARNING

IT IS HARD TO REALIZE THAT THROUGHOUT THESE three years of intense conflict and many triumphs in the Spirit, Rees Howells was working daily at one of the hardest jobs a man can do—down the mine, cutting coal. His was no sheltered, monastic life, but a walk in the Spirit, right in the world, though never of it. During the “spell” down the mine—a period of ten to fifteen minutes when the men got accustomed to the darkness—if he was there, not an obscene word would pass their lips. The impression he made on many of those young fellows down the pit can best be gauged from an incident about ten years later, when he returned to Brynamman from the African mission field. At a crowded meeting in his home church, the front row was filled with those same men, many of whom seldom came near a place of worship. One young miner, Mr. Tommy Howells, who had recently been converted, was so touched by the practical reality he saw in that life “full of faith and the Holy Ghost” that in that meeting their hearts became knit together as Jonathan’s to David’s, and for all the years that followed, “Tommy” became his devoted co-worker and prayer-partner.

But now there came a further call, which was to loosen him yet more from his old moorings. He was out on his favourite Black Mountain, where the silent spaces were so often the gate of heaven to him, and the Lord spoke to him. “For seven hours a day you are

## CALL OUT FROM WAGE-EARNING

earning two shillings an hour," He said, "but you need not work for an earthly master any longer. Would you like to come out and give these seven hours a day to work for Me?"

Rees Howells was standing on a small wooden bridge across a little stream, and the Lord asked him, "Will you give your word to Me that you won't look to another person to keep you? If so, put up your hand and repeat, 'I shall not take from a thread to a shoe-latchet from any person, unless the Lord tells me.'"

Just as Abraham made that stand when he refused the spoils of war that were justly his, lest men should say his prosperity came from natural sources, so God was asking His servant to take this same stand for the rest of his life; and on that bridge he raised his hand and made the solemn vow, adding, "I do believe You are able to keep me better than that Mining Company." It was no mean stand of faith, because Mr. Howells had long since ceased that active ministry in the mission and among fellow Christians, which might have led people to give to him; and the moment he made this vow, the Lord drove home the reality of it to him by saying, "Remember this: you must never take a meal at home without paying for it, or your brothers could say they were keeping you." It was not that the family would have minded helping him, but the Lord was impressing on him that the real life of faith meant receiving all that he needed from God, and being enabled to pay his way, while using all his hours for God; and not being dependent upon any man, most of all his family.

Once again his obedience to God had to be proved at the price of wounding his mother. She had been so pleased that he was no longer living as a Nazarite and doing other "strange" things; surely now he would live a normal life. So when he told her of God's new word

to him, she couldn't take it at first. It was a real conflict, and lasted some days. "What will your father say?" she asked. "If you pay, you will be like a lodger and not a son." But it was a vow to God, and as he said, God would change before he could break it. "If you will allow me to pay for my food, I will remain at home," he told her, "if not, I must leave this afternoon." He actually had to go out and try to arrange for lodgings, before his mother agreed that he should pay her monthly.

The Lord then gave him a month's holiday, which he could spend in worshipping the Beloved of his heart. Each day was spent on the mountain where he never saw the face of man. They were not days of intercession or carrying burdens, but of living fellowship, lost in the presence of God. He often spoke of that month as one of the most precious of his life.

He started the month with one penny, and the Lord did not add anything to it; so as he climbed the mountain the first few days, the devil kept saying each morning, "You haven't had an answer to prayer yet." Then one morning, when he was passing through the iron gate, where he left houses and fields behind, the Lord said, "The moment you shut this gate behind you, don't allow the devil to speak to you again. You will not need a penny until the day you pay your mother." "So I gave the enemy one hit," Rees said, "and told him that I wasn't going to pray a single prayer for money until the end of the month. I never doubted that the people I was working for would pay me on Saturdays, so why should I doubt God? I didn't pray a single prayer again, but lived to worship my heavenly Bridegroom."

On the last day of the month, about midday, the Lord told him to descend the mountain and go home;

and as soon as he arrived, his father came in for lunch. The final test on his new call to a life of faith had come. "The manager says he has kept your job open, and you can take it again if you want to," his father said to him. "What a foolish man, why did he do that?" Rees exclaimed. "But if you don't mean to earn a living again," continued his father, "who is going to keep you?" "Don't you agree that if I am working for God, He can keep me as that last earthly master kept me?" asked Rees. "But can you name one other person who lives this life?" his father asked. "George Müller," Rees answered. "But he is dead. Must you call the dead back to help you?" was the quick reply. "Well," Rees answered, "don't you believe the words of the Saviour, 'Take neither purse nor scrip . . . the labourer is worthy of his hire?'" That quotation seemed to convince his father, who merely added, "I was only bringing you that message."

While he was speaking, the postman arrived with a letter for Rees. It was from Mr. Gosset, offering him a position in the London City Mission, and saying that he would have a salary of £100 a year. He added the words, "Those who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel," and underlined them. Rees could see his father's countenance changing. He was plainly thinking, "How fortunate he is; everything turns out in his favour." "You see that?" he said to Rees. "Those who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel!" "Certainly," Rees answered, "and those who preach faith should live by faith!" The victory was won, his father broke out laughing, and within half an hour the Lord had sent the deliverance he needed. It was a good beginning to forty years of praying and abundantly proving the Lord's prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread."

## *Chapter Twenty-one*

### MADEIRA

**J**UST AT THE TIME THAT UNCLE DICK WAS HEALED, A young man named Joe Evans, who had received a wonderful blessing in one of the first cottage meetings and was a great helper in the work, had a bad haemorrhage from the lungs. The doctors ordered him to a sanatorium, and he came and asked Mr. Howells whether he should go. After waiting on God some days lest his judgment should be swayed by his natural desires, he told Joe to follow medical advice. It looked like a lapse of faith, but God had taught him that He steps in when natural remedies have failed. So he told Joe, "You will be quite safe in going to the sanatorium. Probably the Lord wants to show that medicine can't do it."

He was there for five months, but when he came out he had a high temperature and bad cough. The doctor gave him no hope, but ordered him to buy a tent and live up on the Black Mountain. "Do what the doctor tells you," said Mr. Howells again, "and if that fails, you will have a chance then for the Lord to heal you."

Often, when Mr. Howells visited him on the mountain, Joe would say jokingly, "After I have preached a full victory and you have gained that place of intercession, here I am in my tent like a flag on the top of this mountain, for all to see we have no faith for healing!" Indeed, as Mr. Howells said, "If the Holy Ghost had not taught me that I was only to pray the

prayers He gives, I would have taken up my friend's case long before that. It was a proof that, though the place of intercession was gained, I could only use it as led by the Spirit."

Joe was on the mountain for over two months, but he was no better, and the doctor said he could not possibly live through the winter unless he went to a tropical climate, such as Madeira. This was confirmed by a Swansea specialist, but when Joe's father heard it, he was roused against the doctor. The family were very poor, and he blamed the doctor because he had opened a door through which a rich man's son could go, but his son could not.

That same day Mr. Howells received a gift of £320! "What did I want with £320," he said, "when I could live on twopence a day!" But the reason wasn't far to seek. It was "just like God". Here was the money for Joe! So Mr. Howells asked Joe's father, "If you were a moneyed man, would you send your son to the tropics?" "I should think I would!" he replied. "Well, I have the money and he can go." The man broke down and cried. He was a stranger to the grace of God, but, as Mr. Howells said, "He saw God's love making him equal to a rich man. I thought it was worth it all if only to reach him."

The next problem was how Joe could go to Madeira, when he was obviously not fit to travel alone. Mr. Howells hadn't thought of taking him himself, as already the Lord was beginning to show him plans for the future. But one night he couldn't sleep, and the Lord spoke to him. He asked him who was going to nurse Joe, and then added, "If you don't go with him yourself, don't allow him to go with anyone else. You must not ask anyone else to do what you can do yourself." It was a test to the hilt. He knew what this

might mean. He had dealt so much with consumptives since the first case, that it had given him a horror of the disease, and besides that there had been a great campaign against consumption that year, showing the dangers of close contact with it.

Before mentioning it to anyone else, he told Miss Jones. He made plain to her what might be involved, and that in three months he might come back a consumptive. What would she say about it? She took two days to pray over it, and then told him it was settled. The Lord had asked her, If Rees had been the consumptive and another person had offered to go with him, would she not have accepted that? And does not the Word say, Do to others as you would that they should do to you? On that she came through.

So Joe and he started for the island of Madeira in the summer of 1910. On arrival, the missionary at Funchal, to whom Mr. Howells had an introduction, came to meet them. He noticed at once that Joe was in an advanced stage of the disease, and asked if they had been advised to come by more than one medical man. He then inquired which hotel they would prefer, the English being 7s. 6d. a day and the Portuguese 4s. 2d. The Lord had already told Mr. Howells to take his usual place of abiding and only use money on essentials, so they decided on the Portuguese hotel. To Mr. Howells "the fare was first class, after living on one meal every two days," but it was not to be for long. The Portuguese food did not suit Joe, and by the third day he was very upset. So Mr. Howells told him to rest quietly while he went out in the country and spent a time with the Lord. Here the Lord showed him what to do. He had a right to go up to 8s. 4d. a day, the cost of two at the hotel, so he could put Joe at the English hotel for 7s. 6d. and live himself on the remaining 10d.

When the missionary heard this, he said it was impossible to sleep in Madeira for 1s. a night, and much less live on it, but he had a suggestion to make. Mr. Howells could use the Sailors' Rest, the basement of the mission house. He might have offered him a room in the mission house, which would have seemed the kinder thing to do, but God was in the offer, and He had a special purpose in it.

This Sailors' Rest was a large building, with room for over a dozen people, "but it had not been occupied for months," said Mr. Howells, "except by the creatures that live in empty places in the tropics; so I experienced a little of what Pharaoh and his people went through in the third and fourth plagues in Egypt! There was no sleep the first night, from fightings without and fears within! Things came to a climax at breakfast the next morning. The little box of Quaker oats, the bread and cheese, had others besides myself to share them, and they were busy at their breakfast when I went to prepare mine! I thought I had the same right to complain as Peter—about creeping things, and I began to take thoughts into my mind against the missionary. I wouldn't usually do that for anything; I took care of my mind; but this began to be magnified in me, and I found something in me which prevented me from loving him.

"I was tired and I felt as if life wasn't worth living. I felt more like a man, than a man with the Holy Ghost living in him. I wanted to cry, but the Lord said, 'Before you cry, I want to speak to you. Haven't you preached on James Gilmour in Mongolia living on 2d. a day? Didn't you preach on Ezekiel and the way he lived?' I asked the Lord to forgive me, but He said, 'It must be in you. I brought you to Madeira, to this place, to show you the difference between My love and

yours; and to show you that there is something in your nature that I need to rid you of. The Saviour loved you when you treated Him worse than the missionary has treated you. When He was on earth, He had a position you haven't allowed Me to come up to in you—loving others who do something against you, loving people who give their second or third best, just as if they had given you the very best.'

"I praised God for finding this out in me. I was to love the missionary, not for what he gave me, but because I couldn't help loving him. I could see the root of the Saviour's nature was love, and if the root of mine was love, nothing the missionary did could affect me. I saw it in a flash, and went on my knees, and asked the Holy Spirit not to move me from that place till I came through. Supposing I had remained blind and a fool, and gone on preaching the Sermon on the Mount with this in my nature! If ever I loved the Saviour, it was then. I saw Him loving those who put Him to death—and there are no limits to that love.

"I went out to the hills of Madeira that day and saw His beauty and worshipped Him. I lost sight of my friend, and lived with the Saviour who is perfect, holy. I saw what it would be when I gained the position: the Holy Ghost in me with a perfect love, perfect forgiveness and perfect mercy towards others. You might think I would gain it in an hour. A person might say, 'You could have forgiven!' Yes, perhaps an imitation forgiveness and the thing coming back to you again; but you never really forgive until you become like the Saviour and can forgive like Him. Several times I thought it was real and that I loved the missionary, until I saw him. Then other feelings would return!

"But in six weeks I had changed, as much as a drunkard is changed when he sees what the Saviour has

done for him. I changed altogether. What a life He brought me into! Oh, that perfect love! The proof of it was when I met the local evangelist next day. He had not talked much with me before, but this morning he said, 'Where do you live?' 'In the mission house,' I replied. 'In the house?' he asked. I said to myself, 'You devil!' I could see Satan behind him. 'In the Sailors' Rest?' he continued. 'Yes,' I answered. 'Do you call that Christianity in your country, putting you in a place like that?' he exclaimed. What if he had asked me that a few days before! I answered him by asking another question: 'Do you pay for your electric light and laundry?' 'Yes,' he said, 'They're very expensive.' 'Well, I get mine free. That's Christianity. That's what the missionary has done for me!' Oh, the freedom! Oh, the victory! After that, I never lived in any place which God filled more than the Sailors' Rest. There was more fellowship in an hour there, than in all the time at the hotel with its good meals. I knew the difference between my living in the Sailors' Rest, and God living there."

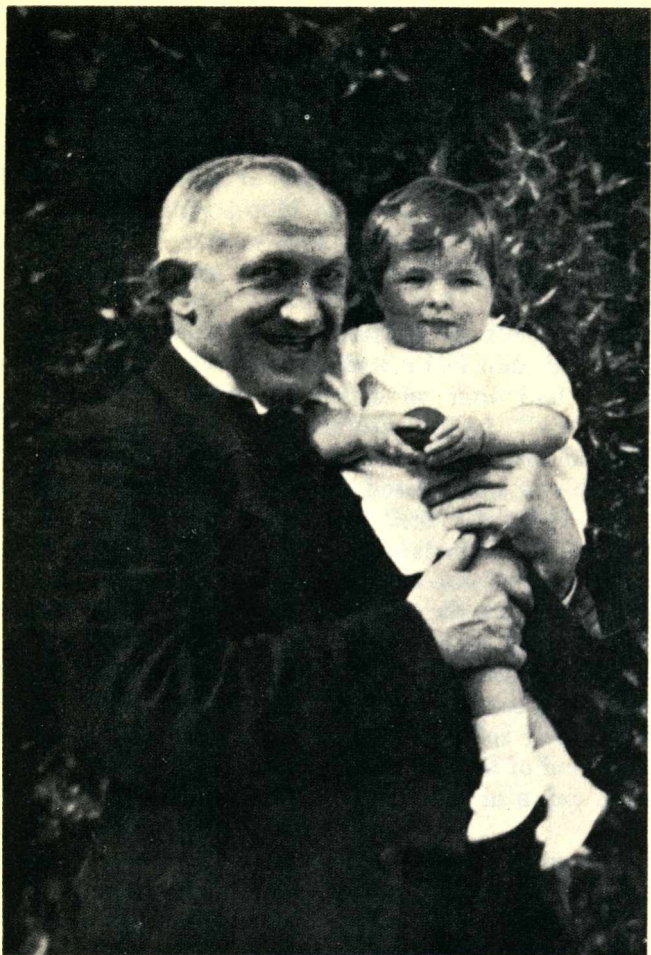
Meanwhile, after two months in the English hotel, Joe was showing no signs of improvement. One day he broke down completely; he thought he was dying, and a longing for home and the old country came over him. It was a dark moment and Mr. Howells felt he must take a stand. "Do you think the Lord brought you out here and would allow you to die, without revealing His will to us?" he asked him, and added, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God." As they parted by the little train which took Mr. Howells down the mountain, Joe burst out crying. It was difficult to go, for Mr. Howells was afraid he might get a haemorrhage in the night, and his tears moved him. But "as I entered the little train," he said, "I heard that Voice

which I know as really as a child knows his father's voice. It said, 'A month to-day Joe will be restored.' The glory of God came down on the train. It was such that the people turned round and seemed to notice something."

On arriving at the Sailors' Rest he sat down immediately and wrote three letters home, to his family, to Joe's father, and to Miss Jones, saying that in a month's time they would be back. On that day, "when everything of nature and medicine had failed," the Lord showed him that "a higher law was going to operate."

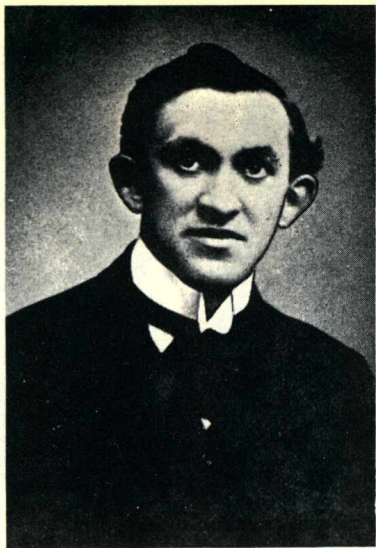
The next morning he returned to Reid's hotel to break the news to Joe. He first asked him, in his mischievous way, what prospects he now had for the future; to which Joe mournfully replied, "Nothing but the grave"; but he had promised not to grumble when he was moved to the English hotel, so he was resigned to God's will! Mr. Howells then reminded him of God's goodness to him in the sanatorium, in the open-air treatment, and in Madeira, and quietly added: "But He has kept the best wine until now; God is going to heal you in a month!" The tears started to flow. "It was like a fountain opened," said Mr. Howells, "and they flowed for two or three days. It seemed too good to believe that he was going home to see his friends. He said he had believed my uncle's case, but to believe for himself was another matter. However, in a day or two he had really grasped it."

Mr. Howells met the missionary's wife that night, and as usual she asked after his friend. "He is very ill," was the answer, "but the Lord has told me He is going to heal him in a month." It seemed an incredible statement to her, and she exclaimed, "How can you say such a thing? You know it can never happen, when

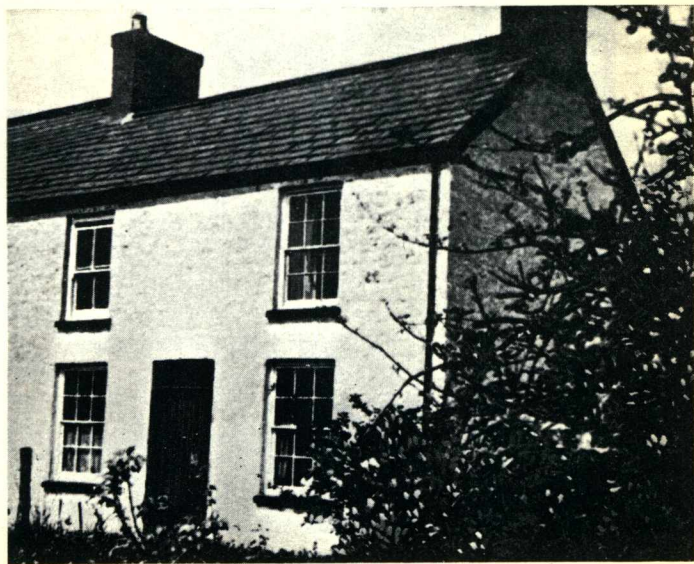


REES HOWELLS

*holding little Ruth, one of the missionaries children.*



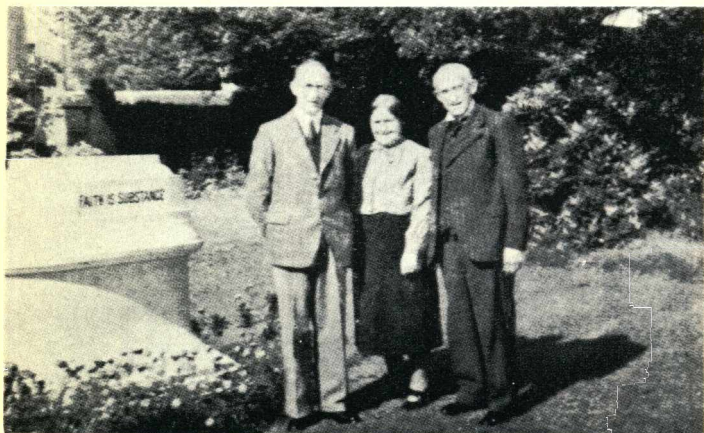
REES HOWELLS  
*in his 34th year.*



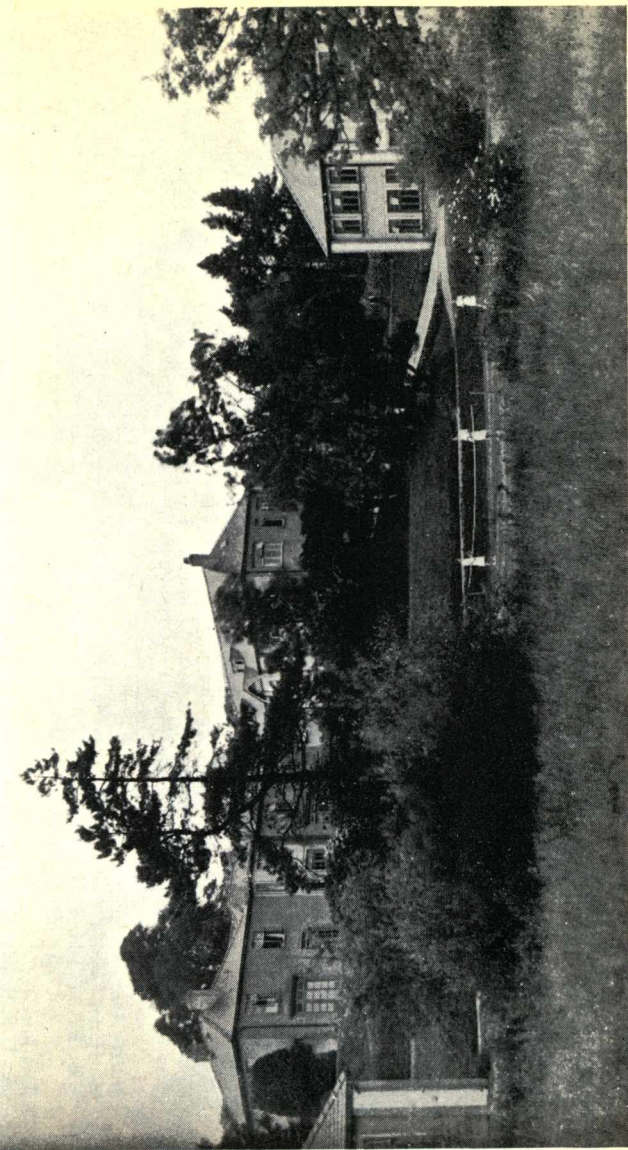
THE HOUSE WHERE REES HOWELLS WAS BORN,  
*occupied by his parents and their eleven children.*



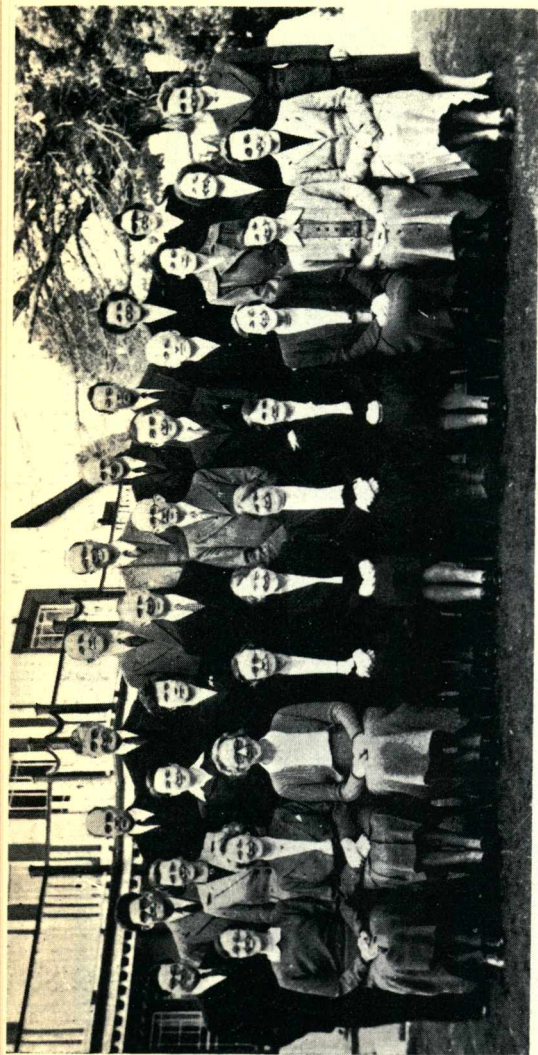
MR. AND MRS. HOWELLS WITH THE EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA  
*Behind are Samuel Howells, Asrate Kassa and  
 Abye Abebe.*



MR. AND MRS. HOWELLS AND SAMUEL,  
*standing by the pedestal in the grounds of Derwen Fawr.*  
 (p. 200)



GLYNDERWEN  
*(The first house purchased)*  
Now THE BIBLE COLLEGE SCHOOL.



SOME OF THE COLLEGE STAFF, 1953

*Seated (left to right):—*

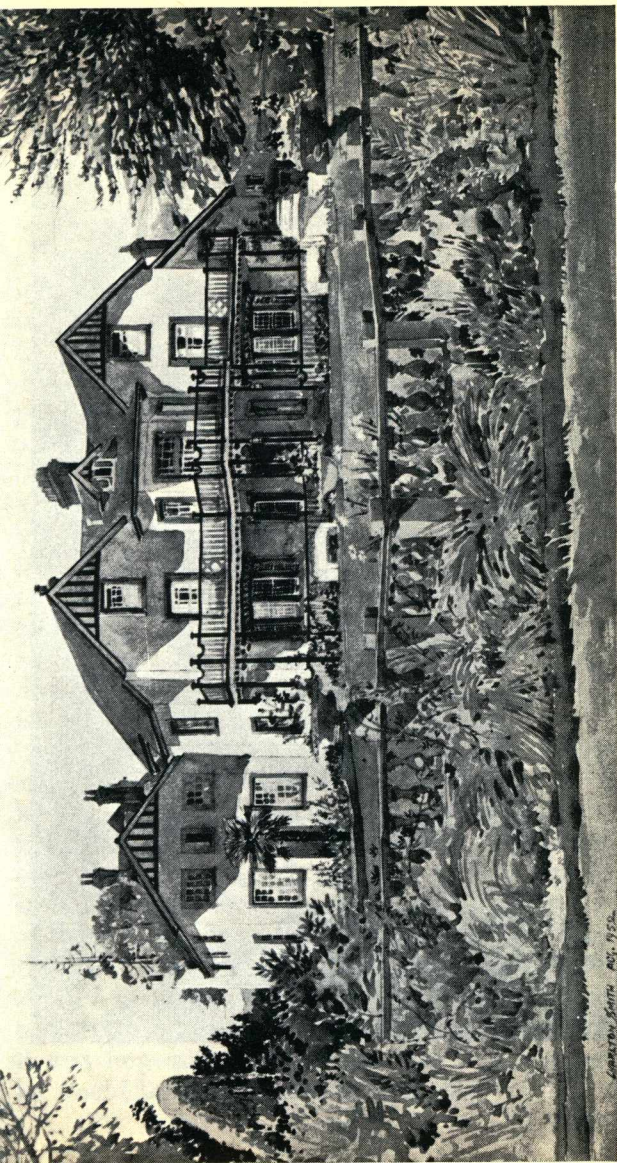
Misses E. E. Stewart and M. Henderson; Mrs. W. Jones, B.Sc.; Miss D. M. Ruscoe, B.A. (*Headmistress*); Miss G. Roderick (*School Matron*); Mrs. Rees Howells; Miss M. Williams (*Women's Superintendent*); Misses J. M. Scott, B.A., G. Thomas, J. B. Davies, B.Sc., M.B., B.Ch.

*Middle Row:—*

Mr. Hanns Gross, B.A.; Misses J. E. Harris, B.Sc.; J. A. FitzHerbert, O. A. Evans, B.Sc.; Rev. K. C. Priddy, M.B., B.S., D.T.M. & H. (*Headmaster*); Rev. S. R. Howells, M.A. (*Honorary Director*); Mr. K. G. Symmonds, F.R.C.S.; Mr. T. Howells; Misses V. M. Sherwood, B.A., C. Morgan, I. M. Judkins, S.R.N.

*Back Row:—*

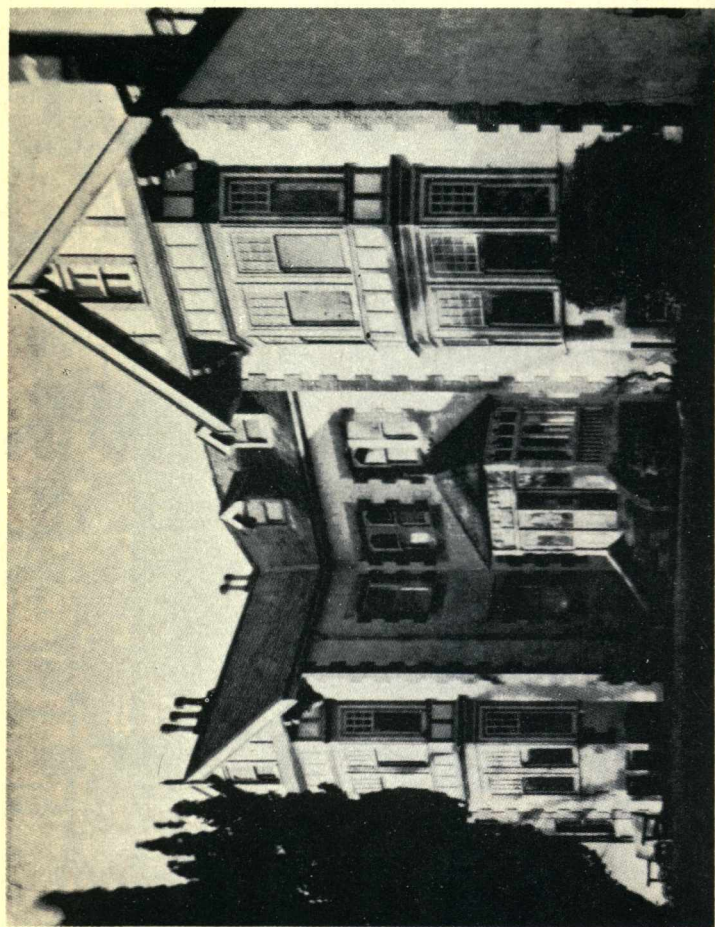
Mr. T. P. Bergin; Rev. I. Jones; Messrs. A. J. E. Jones, D. C. Rees, L. F. Lee, G. S. Crane, B.A., B. N. L. Madoc; Misses A. Potter, B.A.; O. M. Raven, L.R.A.M., S.R.N.



DERWEN FAWR

*The second house purchased; the main  
building of the Bible College.*

LONDON SOUTH AFRICA, 1922.



SKETTY ISAF,  
*the third house purchased.*

both his lungs are nearly gone. It has never happened before!" "It has never happened because of unbelief," he replied, "but the Lord has told me He is going to heal Joe, and we shall be returning in a month's time."

The next morning he met the missionary. He had heard from his wife of their conversation, and he said to him, "I hear you are returning in a month! You came out for the winter, and here you are going back in mid-winter with a consumptive. Are you willing to try a specialist?" "Certainly," replied Mr. Howells. "I have £200, and I am ready to try all that medicine can do, and will do anything the specialist says." He explained to the missionary that he had no conflict with medicine, and that God doesn't step in with a spiritual law till the end of the law of nature has been reached, and he asked him, "If the specialist gives him up, when he is healed will you believe it is God who has done it?" "I will," he replied with tears in his eyes, "I have never heard anything more reasonable." He made it known in all the hotels in Madeira. He also was very surprised at the mention of the £200. He couldn't understand why Mr. Howells lived in the Sailors' Rest, if he had all that money!

The specialist gave Joe a thorough examination, and said he was in a critical condition, and was about to have another haemorrhage. He told Mr. Howells not to let him out of his sight, and that the best thing would be to return home. "So we were both satisfied that the law of nature was at an end," commented Mr. Howells.

When the letter arrived home in Brynamman, saying that Joe was to be healed in a month, his mother showed it to the doctor who had first advised Joe to go to the sanatorium. He laughed when he read it, and said it was impossible, but added that if it became a fact, he would become a believer that day.

Mr. Howells had promised the specialist he would keep near Joe, so he joined him at the hotel. "It was a month's holiday," he said, "because this case needed no prayer. The Lord had said he would be healed, so we trusted His Word, and were as happy as birds. Many in Funchal came to know about it, and were watching for the outcome with keen interest."

The week before the healing, they booked their passages and made all preparations for leaving. Rees Howells also reminded Joe that Uncle Dick had had the exact time of the healing given to him, and suggested that Joe should go to the Lord and ask the time that he was to be healed on the Saturday morning, so that he himself should have a part in it. He came back laughing, saying that he had 3 a.m. and 6 a.m., but he knew that the former came from the devil, because it was too early, so he took the latter! They agreed to send a cable home to Joe's father on the day of the healing.

"It was a very exciting time the day before," said Rees Howells. "I had told him to come into my bedroom at six o'clock the next morning, and bring the news to me. When we shook hands to part for the night, he said, 'I am very nervous, when I think I am going to bed for the last time with this consumption on me.' As for myself, I could hardly sleep all night for joy and excitement, but it was a solemn time, especially between five and six in the morning, waiting for the expected hour to come. But at six o'clock there was no sign of Joe; so I called to him, and here he came with his rug over his head and sat at the foot of my bed with his countenance down, and said, 'There is no change in me, I am exactly the same as I was yesterday!'

"At once the Holy Ghost said to me, 'Are you sending the cable?' I told Joe to go back and pray for me.

He couldn't understand why he should do that, he thought he was the one who needed prayer! I then went back to the Lord, and asked Him what was the cause of the delay. 'If I tell you he is restored,' He said, 'will you send the cable? If you take the healing from Me against what you can see, and what your friend says, you will have gained a higher position than in your uncle's healing.' Here was a very keen point. I knew what it meant to send that cable to the place where my uncle was healed. Everyone would say, if I failed in this, that my uncle's healing was chance. Only a real faith in God could make me do it. The Lord brought to my mind the case of the centurion's servant. Would I believe God's word against what I could see? After wrestling for an hour, I came right through to sending it simply on the word of God, before the actual healing took place. I went up to the post office before eight o'clock that morning and cabled the one word: *Victory*. After the cable had gone I found my hands were dripping with perspiration.

"The next day was Sunday, and at noon we were both sitting out in front of the hotel waiting for lunch-time, when the Lord came down on Joe like a shower of rain, and he was healed on the spot. He told me at once, and was dancing with joy. He asked me to run a race with him, and we did, until he outran me. He was like Elijah running before Ahab—it seemed that all the power had gone to his legs! In our joy we broke the Sabbath by running races! It was joy unspeakable, not only the healing, but the victory of faith. We both attended the missionary's meeting that afternoon. It was the first Joe had been in for twelve months. The victory was wonderful, as the missionary made known the healing in public."

Two days later they left Madeira for home. They

had a great send-off from the hotel by many whom the Lord had blessed, and there was a great parting scene with the missionary and his family. They arrived home on a Saturday, and the next day the doctor came to the house and asked Joe if he had any objection to being examined. Joe was quite willing, and after the examination, the doctor said, "It is wonderful, wonderful. I can't find a trace of the disease in him." The doctor went to chapel that Sunday for the first time since he had come to the district, and some months after, when another consumptive went to him, he said to him, "Look here, a doctor can't do anything for you, go and try the Lord!" The young man looked at him, as if he was making fun, but he repeated it: "I mean it, go and try the Lord!"

After the healing, the reality of the intercessory path that lay behind this victory was tested to the farthest point. Joe entered the ministry, for which he had previously felt a call; but soon after they got back from Madeira, Mr. Howells found himself coughing up blood. He felt sure that in his close association with Joe, he had taken the disease, but he found his inward peace undisturbed, and he had no regrets at what had been done. Actually after several days it was found that the trouble was nothing serious, but he had proved to his own heart that his surrender had been real.

## *Chapter Twenty-two*

### MARRIAGE AND MISSIONARY CALL

VERY SOON AFTER HIS RETURN FROM MADEIRA, REES Howells married Elizabeth Hannah Jones, who also came from Brynamman. This took place on December 21, 1910. They had known each other from childhood. After months of intense conviction, she had been born again in the Welsh Revival. Later she became one of the band of helpers in the village, and gradually the Lord had drawn them together, until they wondered if it were God's will for them to marry and make a home for the tramps. Soon after, however, they were led in the opposite direction—to give up their marriage, not knowing whether it would ever be restored to them. Only now, three years later, did the Lord's word come that their lives should be united in His service. Wholly one with him in outlook Mrs. Howells became a God-given help-meet to her husband and an unfailing co-worker, always sharing the burdens in the Spirit.

A handsome gift was received from America for the wedding expenses; part of it was spent in buying necessities, and part kept for the time of the wedding. A week before the event, however, a person in great need came to Mr. Howells for help. In the life of faith, he always maintained the principle, "First need, first claim"; and this man's need came a week before theirs. So he gave him the money, feeling sure the Lord would supply. But by the day before the wedding, nothing

had come. "I told the Lord," he said, "that if it was any other day, I would not mind, but we could never be without on that day, as we had invited my sister and brother-in-law to accompany us in the morning, and we were to catch the train before the first post. The evening came, and I didn't have a single penny! It was an occasion when one could doubt the Lord, but He had never failed, and late that night the deliverance came. There was great value in it! That was our start together in a life of faith!"

A few months later he went to America with a friend and began to preach again. He visited many old acquaintances, especially in the town where he had been converted. After three months they returned, and it was not long before the Holy Ghost revealed to him that he was to start attending chapel again. It was a strange feeling after being so long in the mission, and then living a hidden life; he and his wife had not been in the chapel for over five years. The next point was, to which should they go? He used to be a member of the Congregational Church, and she a Baptist, and as they sought the Lord's guidance, they were led to a small Congregational chapel which had no minister at the time. This move was more puzzling to the believers than even the hidden life had been, for after the Revival there had been some estrangement between those who had been blessed and the chapels. Many had left and started missions. Rees's eldest brother John, for instance, who was always held in highest respect by the family, was converted in the Revival when a deacon in one of the chapels, and he with some friends was later responsible for building the Gospel Hall in Brynamman, which is still an evangelistic centre in the town. As time went on, the distance between the missions and chapels often grew wider, although in churches where

the ministers were blessed in the Revival, the converts remained and helped them. So when the people heard that Rees had gone back to the chapel, it was looked upon as a sign of backsliding, especially as the one he began to attend was within a mile of the mission.

From the first he started taking part in the meetings, and there was a move of the Spirit. Then one Sunday, when on the way to the service, God told him that he was to enter the ministry! He went straight home and said to Mrs. Howells, "Did you know you had married a minister?" He said nothing of this to the people, but one night the elders asked him if he would like to enter the ministry, and after a church meeting he was accepted and preached his first sermon. A call to the ministry meant training, so together with his wife's brother he began to attend the theological college at Carmarthen.

"In my preaching at that time," he said, "I never touched on intercession or on my past life, any more than the Apostle spoke of his years in Arabia; I was called to preach the simple Gospel, and I kept just to that. What a privilege it was to stand in the pulpit, and in the power of the Holy Ghost proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ! The Lord allowed me to go back and live a most natural life. I was always thankful to Him for letting me have the privilege of preaching to the multitudes in many chapels in the district. There is no glory like that of proclaiming the Cross. I was called to preach more about eternal life than about the divine Person of the Holy Ghost, as there are a great many in our country who believe in the atonement and resurrection, but have no assurance that they have passed from death unto life. From the time I began to preach, there was no further place of intercession gained, because all my hours and thoughts were

given to that work." But he was the same Rees Howells. One day in Carmarthen, he and a fellow-student passed a thinly-clad tramp shivering with the cold. Mr. Howells at once took off his overcoat and gave it to him.

Then in the midst of all this, God called again. He and his wife had a burden of prayer for some missionary friends in West Africa, Mr. and Mrs. Stober of the Angola Evangelical Mission. They felt they should help them in some way, and while they were asking the Lord about it, they read in their magazine that a little girl, Edith, had been born to them. Mr. Howells knew West Africa was no climate for children, so he told his wife that this would be a chance to help them—they could take the little girl while the parents were in Africa. It was a real test; Mrs. Howells would be tied at home, yet the child would never become theirs. She made the decision. "If they give their lives for Africa," she said, "I will give mine for the child." They wrote and told the Stobers, but the answer came that they were soon coming home and could then talk it over.

"I met my friend Stober at the Llandrindod Convention," said Mr. Howells. "He did not say anything for the first few days, and it wasn't until I was on my way to the missionary meeting that he told me how thankful he and his wife were for the offer we had made, but that they were not wanting to leave Edith just then. I walked straight into the meeting, and there I saw a vision of Africa! Mrs. Albert Head was speaking on behalf of the South Africa General Mission, and pleading for a married couple to take the place of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Faithfull, as he was becoming the home secretary. I had heard many people speaking on the need of the mission field, but I never 'saw' the heathen in their need until that afternoon; the Lord

gave me a vision of them, and they stood before me as sheep without a shepherd."

He returned home on Saturday and told his wife, specially about the married couple. That night they prayed for this couple, and could not stop praying for a long time. When they did stop, they could not sleep, and before the morning, the Lord had said, "I will answer the prayer through you. I will send you both out there." "It was the greatest surprise of our lives," said Mr. Howells. "We thought we had a vision of the Africans in order to burden us to pray for someone else to go, but with the Lord we can only push others as far as we are willing to be pushed ourselves. There were a thousand and one hindrances, but the Lord would take no excuses; where there's a will, there's a way."

The greatest problem was that a little boy had been born to them. At the time they had offered to adopt Edith, they had no child. "We had told each other that those missionaries ought to give the child up and devote all their time to the work," said Mr. Howells, "but we little thought that we were preparing a trap for ourselves; what we thought others should do, we were now called to do!"

Months before their little boy was born, the Lord told them to call his name Samuel. There was no Samuel in the family; it was given them, just as the name of John was given to Zacharias. There were several similarities in his life to the one he was named after: one being that Mrs. Howells's name was Hannah, and she too was now to put her son on the altar of sacrifice.

"It was our first test on the call, and the greatest," said Mr. Howells, who tells the story in his own words. "The Saviour had said, 'Anyone who loves son or

daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me', and now the Holy Ghost said to us, 'You must prove to Me that you love the souls of the Africans who are to live for eternity, more than you love your own son.' Does He really mean it? I thought. Yes, He meant it, just as He told Abraham to take his only son up the mountain and offer him as a whole burnt offering. Many a time I had preached about Abraham giving up Isaac, and had emphasized the words, 'Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest.' How little had I realized what that had meant to him!

"I knew what it was to give my life, but to give another's life away was as different as two things could be. God had given us Samuel's name before he was born, and I knew He had a purpose for his life, and this was our test. God said; 'If you give him up, you can never claim him again'; and not once has it ever dawned on us since then that Samuel was ours. We were to surrender him as really as God surrendered His own Son, and Abraham his son. Unless your surrender is real and up to the standard, you will break down long before the end. It wasn't a question of leaving Samuel behind, and then that he should call our attention back to himself; no thought of Samuel was to bring us back to this country.

"The time came for my wife to take a course of Bible training; we did not know what place the Lord would open for little Samuel. We left it entirely in the hands of the Lord, we wouldn't have dared to interfere, or we could have made the greatest mistake. A few weeks before the time for us to leave I was sent for by my uncle, a brother of the one who was healed; his wife was the headmistress in the country school where they lived in Garnant, near Ammanford. He asked if we were taking Samuel with us. I said, 'No.' 'Where is he

going to?' I said I didn't know. 'Well,' he said, 'he is to come here.' They had never seen him, although they lived within three or four miles, but he said that a few nights before, something came over them about him, and they wanted to nurse him while we were away. In a couple of days they were coming up to see him.

"Walking home that day to tell my wife was more than one could bear. Although we had given him up in our hearts, when the Lord actually opened a door for him, it was like pulling one's heart to pieces; but before I had reached home, I had enough victory to control myself; it would have been no use for me to show my wife that I was giving way. When I arrived home, she was playing with him. I thought I had never seen him as he was that night, and for a time I could not break the news; but I took courage and told her. The scene that followed can better be imagined than described, and we were glad we only had to go through it once in a lifetime. We proved that night that Africa was going to cost us something. We were coming up to the victory by degrees, the process was slow and hard; because it was going to be an intercession, one had to walk every inch.

"My uncle and aunt came up, and they had never seen a child like him! Without a doubt the Lord had put a father's and mother's love in their hearts towards him. The first thing they did was to invite my sister to be his nurse; it was just like Miriam and Moses. The morning came when my sister arrived to fetch him; I think in eternity we shall look back on what we went through then, giving our best to the Lord; we knew what it was to give money, health, and many other things, but this was the hardest test. The devil was not quiet that morning. He said I was the hardest man in the world to give my little child up; and the worst of

all was to enter into the feelings of my wife, preparing his clothes, etc. His going out was more than emptying the house; he emptied our hearts too. When I came home that night, I asked my wife, 'How did you get through?' She said she went out into the garden and wept, and thought to herself, 'I have been singing that hymn many a time:

But we never can prove the delights of His love,  
Until all on the altar we lay,

and this morning I have to prove it.' But then the Lord told me, 'Measure it with Calvary.' And with those words she came through.

"In praying together afterwards, the Lord showed me the reward. He said to us, 'For everything you give up for Me, there is the hundredfold; and on this you can claim 10,000 souls in Africa,' and we believed it."

After Mr. and Mrs. Howells left for Africa, Samuel became so completely a son to Mr. and Mrs. Rees that his name was changed to Samuel Rees. He grew up with them and later went to Oxford University where he graduated. It was with him literally, as with Samuel of old, that he seemed set apart for the Lord and served Him from his youth up. He accepted Christ as his personal Saviour at the age of twelve. His adopted parents wanted him to become a doctor, but he felt the Lord's call to the ministry. After his University course he came back to join his own father, with his foster parents' loving consent, although Mr. and Mrs. Howells never raised one finger to draw him in their direction. It was God who sent him back to them. He became assistant Director of the Bible College, of which now, since his father's home call, he is Director, and is once again known to everybody by the name of

## MARRIAGE AND MISSIONARY CALL

Samuel Rees Howells. How perfectly the Lord has fulfilled the promises given to his father and mother even before his birth, and how abundantly the Lord has honoured the sacrifice made by his parents in giving him up, and the love and care showered on him by his foster parents.

## *Chapter Twenty-three*

### STANDING IN THE QUEUE

MEANWHILE, MR. HOWELLS HAD WRITTEN TO MR. Albert Head, who was chairman of the South Africa General Mission, as well as being chairman of the Keswick and Llandrindod Conventions, and offered for the mission field. He told him about the healing of his uncle and Joe, and he received a letter from Mr. Head asking him to come up to London and meet the Council of the mission, and to bring Joe with him.

The morning they left for London, he and Mrs. Howells only had £2, and she needed money that very day. But, as usual, "First need, first claim." As he was going before the post arrived, he had the claim on the money, and he comforted his wife by saying that more would be sure to come in the post! Joe and he arrived in London with only five shillings, having taken single fares. Mr. Howells met the Council the next evening, and he and Mrs. Howells were accepted for the field. A meeting had been arranged for him the following day by Mr. Head, where he was to speak on intercession. The Lord blessed, and when he left the day after, as Mr. Head shook hands with him, he said, "The Lord has been speaking to me through you. I have never 'kept' a missionary before, but God has told me to keep you as my missionary. No one else is to support you, and while you are preaching in Africa, I will share in the harvest!"

Before they took their return train, they had lunch with some friends, and as they left, an envelope was

put into Mr. Howells's hand. When he opened it at Paddington, there were five golden sovereigns inside. They had arrived with five shillings, but were leaving with five pounds! "The Lord has only done for us what he did with the water that was turned into wine," Joe remarked. "He has just changed the colour!" They had a praise meeting when they arrived home, Mrs. Howells telling how the £2 came half an hour after he had left. "There is nothing in the world better for strengthening one's faith than testings!" was Mr. Howells's comment.

Later, they both left for Scotland, where Mrs. Howells was to take a year's training in the Faith Mission. Shortly afterwards, he left her there and went on to London for a nine months' medical course at Livingstone College. Here again there were many trials of faith, and deliverances. His special friend at the College, with whom he had close fellowship in the Spirit, was Mr. Harold St. John of the Brethren, who became well known later as a Bible teacher. They used to get up at five o'clock each morning to wait on God, knocking on the wall between them to wake each other. Meanwhile, Mrs. Howells had all her needs supplied in Scotland; Mr. Howells never once had to send her anything. "We were in the school of faith," he said, "and there is nothing to be compared with having to be delivered to keep you abiding: you will never do it without."

On one occasion he only had a few days in which to get £20. This was needed for Mrs. Howells's admission to a maternity course in the City Road Hospital, for which she was coming down to London. There was another student, a Cambridge graduate, who had been saying openly that he had never prayed a prayer that had brought a direct, definite answer. So Mr. Howells

invited him to join in this prayer for £20. He had never heard of praying for money like that and expecting it to come. They were to pray for two hours one afternoon, each in his own room. The young man was exhausted at the end of it! He had never known time go so slowly; he said the two hours were like two months! Mr. Howells did not pray through in the afternoon, so suggested that they should go back for a further two hours in the evening. "What!" exclaimed his friend, "four months' hard labour for £20!" However, he agreed to try again if Mr. Howells thought he could be of any help. Before the end of this second period of prayer, Mr. Howells went to his room, and said, "You don't need to pray any more, I am through." "Have you got the money?" he said. "No, but I have got the faith, and the money will come." Late that night they were taking a walk together, when this student suddenly stopped, leant against a fence and roared with laughter. "What are you laughing at?" Mr. Howells asked. "I was just thinking of the chap who will have to give that £20." He had seen it. Two days later Mr. Howells received two £10 notes. What a blessing it was when he went to his friend's room and held them up for him to see! It became quite a habit of the Principal of the College to invite Mr. Howells in to tea whenever he had any special visitors, and ask him to relate some of his experiences of faith.

Some people wondered why Mr. Howells studied medicine, after the Lord had given him such wonderful cases of healing. But the point was, as has already been mentioned, that he never was opposed to medicine. The principle he had found in a life of intercession was that "man's extremity is God's opportunity", and most of the cases he had were when medicine had failed. Commenting on this, Mr. Howells said that he

had only refused to give medicine in one case, and that was when Samuel was born and his wife was gravely ill. The Lord had told him she was not to take medicine. "What a test it was!" he said. "It was a fight of faith for me and a fight with death for her. I never shook in my position. The one thing I knew was that the Lord *told* me. I said to my wife, 'You are not to take medicine, and you are not to die.' At our extremity, in our reading one morning, the words 'Have faith in God' stood out in golden letters. We believed, and from that moment she began to get well."

On the general subject of medicine and faith, Mr. Howells said: "To tell other people not to take medicine, when we are not sure of our guidance, is nothing less than tragedy, if they die. But I know of cases where people were guided not to take medicine and had victory all through their lives. One was Lord Radstock, who gave me many instances of how the Lord had honoured faith. Another was A. B. Simpson, the founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, who proved over and over again that there is healing in the Blood. In cases of giving medicine, it depends wholly on guidance; if the Holy Ghost leads a person not to give it, He will be sure to make up for it. We were both guided to take a course in nursing and medicine, and the proof was that the Lord had to answer prayer to enable us to do so. After we had finished our training in Edinburgh and London, the Lord opened the way for me to be a dispenser with a doctor for six months, and my wife to take a maternity course, both of which proved most useful on the mission field."

About a week before they sailed, they received money from the mission to pay their expenses to London, but they needed some things to complete their outfit, and once again the rule was applied—first need,

first claim. "There is always a tendency to keep money, so as to get out of God's testings," said Mr. Howells, "and we tried our best to do it this time! Anyway, we had to spend the money, and all the people of the place thought we were well supplied. So we were, up to that week, and we thought money would be sure to come the day before we were to leave for London; but the last post came and no money, and our train was leaving before the post next morning. We thought it would be very hard to say good-bye to my uncle and aunt and little Samuel, but the burden for the train money made the parting a little easier! That is often the way with the Lord; when we have a very hard thing to do, He will burden us in another way to make the former one easier.

"Next morning, it was not so hard to part with our parents, because we had to walk to the station without the money! We felt sure that it would come on the station platform, but no, the time came for the train to leave. What were we to do? There was only one thing possible. We still had ten shillings, and we must go as far as we could with it, then our extremity would be God's opportunity. We had to change trains at Llanelly station, about twenty miles from our home, and wait there a couple of hours; so without letting anyone know, we only booked as far as that. There were many people at our home station wishing us all the good things, but what we needed was money to go to London! Many also came as far as Llanelly, singing all the way. The thought that came to me was, 'I'd sing better if I had the money!'

"We went out to breakfast with some friends at Llanelly, and then walked back to the station still not delivered; and now the time for the train had come. The Spirit then spoke to me and said, 'If you had

money what would you do?' 'Take my place in the queue at the booking office,' I said. 'Well, are you not preaching that My promises are equal to current coin? You had better take your place in the queue.' So there was nothing I could do except obey. There were about a dozen people before me. There they were passing by the booking office one by one. The devil kept on telling me, 'Now you have only a few people in front of you, and when your turn comes, you will have to walk through. You have preached much about Moses with the Red Sea in front and the Egyptians behind; but now you are the one who is shut in.' 'Yes, shut in,' I answered, 'but, like Moses, I'll be gloriously led out!' When there were only two before me, a man stepped out of the crowd and said, 'I'm sorry I can't wait any longer, but I must open my shop.' He said good-bye and put thirty shillings in my hand! It was most glorious, and only a foretaste of what the Lord would do in Africa, if we would obey. After I had the tickets, the people who came with us to the train began to give gifts to us, but the Lord had held them back until we had been tested. We were singing all the way to London!"

On their arrival, Mr. Head asked them to breakfast the next morning. He then told them that he had £50 for them, but he didn't post it. "Thank God, you didn't," said Mr. Howells, adding to himself, "I wouldn't have been without the test in the queue for anything."

They had all their outfit except three things: a watch, a fountain pen, and a raincoat each. They had never mentioned these things to anyone, but at breakfast Mr. Head asked, "What kind of watches have you?" and told them that his son, Alfred, wanted to give them a watch each. He then asked, "Have you prepared for

the rainy seasons in Africa? Have you got good raincoats?" When they said they hadn't, he told them to go and get one each, and wrote down an address on a card, saying that they were to get them at his expense. After writing the address, he asked, "Have you seen this kind of fountain pen?" "No," they replied. "You must take one each with you," he said—the three things they had named to the Lord, he named to them!

Mr. Head asked them to come to breakfast the following morning again and to take prayers. He suggested that Mr. Howells should tell the servants a little of his experiences of faith. "You used to have a life of faith, some time ago, didn't you?" he said. "Yes, and quite recently too," answered Mr. Howells, and told them about standing in the queue. Mr. Head could hardly breathe, waiting to hear how he got out of it. "I have never heard anything like it," he exclaimed; but Mr. Howells told them he hadn't finished yet, and that what had happened at Corrie Lodge the previous day in that very room was better still; and he told them the story of the watches, raincoats and fountain pens. "I prefer this to £1,000," said Mr. Head; "to know that the Lord can guide me like this in my giving."

So they left England on July 10, 1915, after a glorious victory, knowing that the One who had called them into this life was able to deliver in all circumstances.

## *Chapter Twenty-four*

### REVIVALS IN AFRICA

THE SOUTH AFRICA GENERAL MISSION HAD BEEN founded in 1889 to take the Gospel into the many unevangelized areas of South Africa, the first President of the Mission being the Rev. Andrew Murray. When Mr. and Mrs. Howells joined it, the mission had 170 European and African workers in twenty-five stations, reaching as far north as the southern frontier of the Belgian Congo, and east and west into untouched parts of the Portuguese territories of Angola and Mozambique. The Howells were sent to the Rusitu mission station in Gazaland, near the border of Portuguese East Africa. They joined Mr. and Mrs. Hatch who had laboured there for several years and who, with others who had preceded them, had laid a firm foundation and paid a real price in taking the Gospel to the people. Mr. and Mrs. Hatch had recently been studying the subject of the Lord's Second Coming, and giving time to the Word of God and prayer, longing for a deeper blessing in their own souls, that fuller blessing might come to their people. When, therefore, the Howells arrived, there was already preparation of heart for a work of the Holy Spirit.

The natural thing for new recruits to the mission field is to spend a considerable period in language study, acclimatization and getting generally used to life in a new country; but the people had already heard that Mr. and Mrs. Howells came from the land where the

Revival had been, and straightway asked them if they had brought that blessing with them. Mr. Howells told them that the Source of all revival is the Holy Ghost, and that He could do among them what He had done in Wales. They asked him to preach about it, of course by interpretation. They had no word in their language for revival, so he told them about Pentecost: that it was God who had come down then, moving upon the hearts of men and women, and had swept multitudes into the Kingdom; and that He would do the same with them, if they were willing to repent.

In the meetings that Mr. Howells took he continued to speak to them about Revival, and in six weeks the Spirit began to move upon the Christians. On Friday evening, when about a dozen of them had gathered in the Howells's house, Mrs. Howells taught them the chorus, "Lord, send a revival, And let it begin in me." The Spirit was upon them as they sang, and they continued the singing the next days in their gardens and elsewhere. As Mr. Howells listened to them, he recognized a sound he had heard in the Welsh Revival. "You know it when you hear it," he said, "but you can't make it; and by the following Thursday I was singing it too. There was something about it which changed you, and brought you into the stillness of God."

That evening, as their custom was each Thursday, the four missionaries met together for Bible reading and prayer. While they were on their knees, the Lord spoke to Mr. Howells, telling him that their prayer was heard and the revival was coming. He called them all to rise: there was no need of further prayer: the Holy Ghost was coming down to give a Pentecost in their district. So great was the power of God's word that every moment after that they expected the break. At every knock on the door they felt sure it was someone coming

to tell them that the Holy Ghost had come. They waited thus for two days, and on the Sunday—He came. We have Mr. Howells's own account of the days that followed:

"The Sunday was October 10—my birthday— and as I preached in the morning you could feel the Spirit coming on the congregation. In the evening down He came. I shall never forget it. He came upon a young girl, Kufase by name, who had fasted for three days under conviction that she was not ready for the Lord's coming. As she prayed she broke down crying, and within five minutes the whole congregation were on their faces crying to God. Like lightning and thunder the power came down. I had never seen this even in the Welsh Revival. I had only heard about it with Finney and others. Heaven had opened, and there was no room to contain the blessing. I lost myself in the Spirit and prayed as much as they did. All I could say was, 'He has come.' We went on until late in the night; we couldn't stop the meeting. What He told me before I went to Africa was actually taking place, and that within six weeks. You can never describe those meetings when the Holy Spirit comes down. I shall never forget the sound in the district that night—praying in every kraal.

"The next day He came again, and people were on their knees till 6 p.m. This went on for six days and people began to confess their sins and come free as the Holy Spirit brought them through. They had forgiveness of sins, and met the Saviour as only the Holy Spirit can reveal Him. Everyone who came near would go under the spell of the Spirit. People stood up to give their testimonies, and it was nothing to see twenty-five on their feet at the same time. At the end of one week nearly all were through. We had two revival meetings

every day for fifteen months without a single break, and meetings all day on Fridays. Hundreds were converted—but we were looking for more—for the ten thousand, upon whom He had told us we had a claim.”

As the news reached England of this breaking forth of the Spirit, and its spread to neighbouring stations, Mrs. Bessie Porter Head, the wife of Mr. Albert Head, published two booklets. They were called *Advance in Gazaland*, and *Retrospect and Revival in Gazaland*.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Head started by giving some account of the founding of the Rusitu station in 1897. Several early pioneers had laid down their lives in founding the work, including Mr. Hatch's first wife. They had been sowing for years, and as Mrs. Head said, after Mr. and Mrs. Howells arrived and the blessing had begun: “The two former (Mr. and Mrs. Hatch) have laboured for many years there, truly ‘sowing in tears’ the seed of life with patience and prayer. The two latter (Mr. and Mrs. Howells) are now helping them to ‘reap with joy’ a great harvest, which is being gathered in by the power of the Holy Spirit to the glory of God.” After describing the mighty movement of the Spirit on that first Sunday, she continues: “Meetings lasted from early morning till sunset, with only a short interval, the people weeping and confessing their sins, so that the missionaries could not put in a word, but simply wept with them and prayed for them. Sometimes everyone would be kneeling and confessing together in great agony of soul, and then one and another would ‘get free’ and begin to sing for joy. This went on day by day from Sunday till Thursday, the Spirit doing a mighty convicting work in souls and leading to confessions such as no human agency could have extorted from them...

<sup>1</sup> These extracts are published by kind permission of the South Africa General Mission.

"Hearing of God's working in such a remarkable manner at Rusitu, an invitation was sent from the American Board Mission Station (some forty miles to the south) to Mr. Hatch and Mr. Howells to visit Mount Silinda. . . this is a large station with a staff of doctors, minister, school mistresses, etc. . . . At the first meeting, at 9 a.m. on Thursday, the building was crowded, and the missionaries told how the blessing had come to Rusitu, and what were the conditions of blessing. After two or three of the Rusitu Christians had given their testimonies, crowds began to cry for mercy, and to confess their sins, the numbers being so great that it was impossible to help them all, though the meeting lasted till one o'clock in the day. All met again at 2 p.m. and there was a wonderful time, the men who had held back somewhat in the morning coming forward in confession of sin, and completely broken down, teachers, evangelists, and scholars all praying and confessing, and this went on without any confusion, under the Spirit's control, until sunset. . .

"As was said previously, none but the Holy Spirit could have made the people confess the sins which burdened them. For instance, a tall man stood up and related in broken voice the following story. In one of the native wars the young men were boasting of how they killed women, etc., so this man went and in cold blood killed a young girl. After he became a Christian, she seemed to be constantly before him, as if asking why he had killed her. As an ordinary Christian he had thought this was too great a sin to confess, and only Holy Ghost power led to the confession. He wept and wept, and said he was the chief of sinners, and was in agony of soul for hours. But what a scene when he got freed! He could only say, 'Thank You, Lord Jesus.' He began to give his testimony, and said that for years

he had not known what peace was, and then he would break out afresh saying, 'Thank You, Lord Jesus!' That day about a hundred souls came to complete deliverance and victory, and on the Saturday scores came through into the new life of peace and surrender, and, instead of soul agony, the majority were praising and singing with joy. On the Sunday over two hundred had come into liberty, and there was no need for the missionaries to speak, as four or five were standing at a time each to take their turn to give testimony. . .

"Perhaps the most blessed outlook for the district is that God mightily met and filled with His Spirit twenty young men and women, who some weeks before the revival had offered themselves to the Lord for evangelistic work in Portuguese East Africa. . .

"As this brief account of God's working goes to the press, further tidings have come to hand of the continued outpouring of God's Spirit in the Gazaland district. . . During the short visit of Mr. Hatch and Mr. Howells to Melsetter, the power of the Spirit was so mighty in the meetings that white people and black were alike deeply convicted, and lives were wholly surrendered to God. . . The farmsteads on the road to Melsetter were visited, and six Dutch and English were converted, and four who were already Christians surrendered fully to God. . .

"Are not these facts encouragements to us all to 'continue instant in prayer', and will not God continue to show us His 'greater things', not only in Gazaland, but right throughout South Africa? The little flames that are already alight in different centres may by our prayers be fanned into a mighty blaze. . ."

Mrs. Howells now continues the story: "At the end of fifteen months, a request came to all the mission stations from the head office of the S.A.G.M. in Cape Town

asking the missionaries and Africans to give half an hour every morning from 7 to 7.30 to pray specially that every station might receive the same blessing as we had experienced at Rusitu. Mr. Howells used to go to a little summer-house for this special half-hour of prayer. One Monday morning, about a month after starting to pray, I saw Mr. Howells coming in, when he had only been out a quarter of an hour, and I could see by his face that something marvellous had happened to him. He said, 'I was pleading on His word, Malachi 3 : 10, and I *saw* the Holy Ghost descending. He appeared to me. I *saw* Him coming down on all the mission stations,' and the glory of God was so much on him that he was not in himself. He said he couldn't stay on the station, but must go up to the mountain. He couldn't be still, but for a whole day walked miles upon the mountain shouting praises to God. I followed him until I was too tired for words! He was in that glory all the week—it was so great as to be almost unbearable."

Mr. Howells did not think that he would be the one to go round the stations, until a month later they had an invitation to a Conference at Durban, at which all the missionaries who could leave their stations were to be present; and they asked Mr. and Mrs. Howells to bring sufficient clothes for six months, as they wanted them to go round the stations. Mr. Howells so shrank from the responsibility of being the one God would use, that he said he couldn't come. "I have only been on the field two years", was his excuse; but the answer came back from Mr. Middlemiss, the Superintendent in Cape Town, "You are a man under authority and you must come"!

Before they left to go down to Durban Mr. Middlemiss wrote and said, "I know you haven't a banking account (he knew that they had been led to give 50 per cent of

their salary away so as to continue to maintain a personal life of faith), so will you wire if you haven't the money for your fare." But Mr. Howells said, "No, I'll never wire. We are going to trust the Lord." He regarded it as a good means of proving that the call was really from the Lord. It came to the last post before they were to leave at 6 a.m. the next day. In that post was a letter from a friend in America, who had never given them money before, sending in dollars the equivalent of £25. So they started their journey in full assurance of faith.

There were forty-three missionaries present at the Conference. Mr. Howells hadn't expected to take part more than anyone else, but the blessing was so great in the opening meetings that he was asked to speak every day. For about three weeks it was like a revival. Some nights the meetings went on into the early hours of the morning, and all the missionaries received a blessing. They were so full of joy that they were even singing on the street cars. By the end of the Conference the missionaries gave Mr. Howells a unanimous invitation to visit all the stations, thus confirming the intimation he had already received from the Council at Cape Town. All then went back to their stations to pray and prepare for the visit, in expectation that the Holy Ghost would fall on each station, as He had done at Rusitu.

Mr. Howells continues the story: "How could I believe that there would be scores saved on these stations, where in some cases the ground was still very stony? The enemy challenged me on this and asked me how I could carry revival from one land to another, with different languages, and hundreds of miles between them. I didn't overcome this test in a day, there was many a hard battle, for the issues were tremendous, but I remember when I did come through. I said that there

was no need to take people with the blessing from station to station, because the Holy Ghost was going in us, and He is the Author of Pentecost, and the Source of revival.

"Our journey took us over 11,000 miles, visiting five countries—Swaziland, Pondoland, Bomvanaland, Tembuland and Zululand. We were two years away from our own station.

"On the first station it was hard going the first day. The missionary told us of much backsliding in the church, even some of the deacons had been causing trouble; but on the third day, the Spirit came down and swept the place. Two of the deacons were always sitting at the back, and when the people began to confess their sins and come through to great blessing, they came up to me and said, 'We enjoy the meetings very well, but we don't like this confessing of sins. When it begins we feel a great pain in the back of our heads!' 'Quite so,' I answered; 'but one day it will move down a little lower—to your hearts!' 'Do you think we need confess?' they then inquired. 'If you have sinned against God,' I replied, 'it is between you and God; but if you have sinned against the church, you must confess before the church.' One of these deacons was named Jephthah. He went to pray and continued in prayer for about three days. Then, about one o'clock in the morning, his wife came and knocked us up: 'Do come, Jephthah is mad with joy! Shall we ring the bell and call the people together for a meeting?' 'You can't ring the bell at this hour of the night,' I protested; but his mother went round all the people, calling them together, and at 3 a.m. the church was packed! Jephthah was blinded, just like the Apostle Paul; they had to lead him to the church, where he confessed the sins he had been committing. After that, scores were converted. His sight returned in a few days, and we took him around with

us for about three months. Whenever he gave his testimony, it was like shots from a gun all the time, as one after another would go down under the Spirit's conviction, and he never failed to get many through.

"In the next place there was a school of ninety-nine girls. They had heard that people were confessing their sins, so they met together and agreed among themselves that they were not going to confess theirs! The first two meetings were very hard in consequence, but at midnight on the second day a cry went up and they could hold out no longer. They began to confess, until ninety-eight were converted; the other one ran away. Many began to pray for their families, who had never been to a meeting.

"The next place we visited was Bethany, where the Queen of Swaziland lived. The first day we were thirteen hours in the chapel, dealing all the time with souls. On the third day, the power that was there! It wasn't the preaching, it was the power. One African prayed, 'Lord, give us a hundred converts in the next three days.' Those were the believings of the Holy Ghost. The Queen of Swaziland sent for me. She asked why her people were going after my God. I told her it was because they had met the living God, and had forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life. I told her that God had one Son, and He gave Him to die for us; and we had one son, and had left him to tell the people of Africa about God. She was very much affected by hearing that my wife and I loved her people more than we loved our own son. She allowed me to have a private meeting with her chief men, but said I must not look at her, but speak as if I were only talking to them! Later, in the chapel, the power of God was on the meeting, and when I tested it, fifty stood up, including the young queen, the daughter-in-law of the

reigning queen. The man who had prayed for a hundred souls leapt to his feet, exclaiming, 'Praise God for answering prayer. Fifty souls—and the queen, another fifty! we have our hundred!' But before the three days were ended, a hundred and five had accepted Christ. When we came back some time later the old queen asked to see us privately. She told us that she had just lost her daughter, who had also become a Christian, and she had died in perfect peace, trusting in Jesus. She seemed very much affected, and added that she too, in her heart, had accepted the Saviour.

"In Pondoland, on one station, I was preaching on Good Friday on the crucifixion, and the Spirit brought out those words, 'Away with Him, crucify Him!' It seemed as though the people saw hell opened before them, and in one mass the whole congregation rushed forward to get right with God. I was afraid they would push the pulpit over.

"At another place in Zululand where I was preaching, an evangelist was convicted of lack of power to win souls. He went out to the bush and cried all night to God. The next day he accepted the Holy Spirit. He came through most gloriously, and the outcome of that anointing was such that before very long his out-station had become greater than the main station."

In ways like these the Holy Ghost came down on every station and gave revival, exactly as He had said He would do, and fulfilled the promise of the 10,000 souls. In Johannesburg, for instance, Mr. Howells conducted great revival meetings for twenty-one days in one of the largest churches and it was packed every night. He had to speak through three interpreters, there were so many different tribes, but that did not hinder the Spirit breaking through and hundreds coming out every night for salvation. No one was more conscious

than His servant that the Holy Ghost was the Doer of it, and that it was "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit." He laid hands on hundreds under the Spirit's power and guidance, and they came free every time. Outside the meetings he would look at his hands, see how ordinary they were, and wonder where the power came from! But he knew!

At the end of the tour, on the way back from Johannesburg to Rusitu, they had been invited by a friend to stay with him in Umtali, which was a railhead. From there they were to get the post-cart which was running to Melssetter, and then finish their journey on horseback or donkey. When they arrived at Umtali, their friend met them at the station, and told them he was very sorry he could not have them as there was influenza in the house. He suggested their going to the hotel where missionaries usually stayed. They found this would cost them 15s. a day. They had no money, but Mr. Howells said to his wife. "Let's enjoy ourselves; I'm sure the Lord will deliver before the end of the week." So they made a good holiday of it.

The post came by rail on Saturday evening, and they were looking to the Lord to send something by it, as they were leaving next day at 6 a.m. But when they went down to meet the train, they were told there had been a breakdown, and it was not expected that night. "We teased one another that we were not enjoying our meal that evening as much as usual!" said Mr. Howells. "We had told the hotel keeper to have our bill ready for Sunday morning. At 5 a.m. he knocked at the door and gave it us. We said we were going up to the post and would pay him at six. At 5.30 a.m. we went, praying all the way. We had a Box number in Umtali, to which we had told some of our friends to write. 'Is there anything in Box 32?' I asked. The man looked and said,

'Nothing at all, sir.' But in a flash it came to my wife, it was not 32, but 23! There was just one letter. It had five different addresses on it. It had followed us around, and reached us on this very morning with £30 in it. As well as the hotel bill, we had to pay £7. 10s. for the post-cart. Although it was hard and springless, it was like the best motor-car to us. We never thought of the cart or the 140 miles—the springs were in us!"

During their first two years Mr. and Mrs. Howells had learned the language, Chindau. On their return to Rusitu they settled in to the normal routine of an African mission station, when Mr. and Mrs. Hatch went on furlough, and they were left in charge of a boys' and girls' school, as well as the meetings and adults' work. Much must be passed over of their daily experiences during these years; there was, however, one outstanding event. The revival was still continuing, but there was one special obstacle: hardly any of the married men were converted. They were bound by an age-old custom called Labola, which some think originated with Laban! The fixed price for a wife was £25, which meant a large sum for a father with three or four girls; but a converted man could never sell his daughter, so no married men turned to the Lord. The Spirit then reminded Mr. Howells of his former intercession for a lost soul, and told him to challenge the devil on this point and use the victory of Calvary to set these men free to accept Christ.

He was building a house at the time, so he prayed that he would get married men to work on it. Six of them applied. There were prayers every morning and they were hearing the Gospel. The first guidance the Lord gave him was to ask them to come to the Sunday morning service, instead of digging in their gardens. They said they came every morning—but those daily meetings were during their working hours, and they

had no objection to being paid for sitting down! He told them that it would please God much more if they came of their own accord on Sundays. They did come, and five were saved. It was the first break in the enemy's ranks, but there were still hundreds untouched. How could God reach them?

God had a way that was most unexpected. It was the time of the great influenza epidemic which spread over the world just after World War I, and caused millions of deaths; and not long after these first five had come through, Mr. Howells heard that the 'flu had reached their district, and many were down with it. It troubled him that this scourge should come, just when the break among the married men had begun, but the Lord said to him, "Don't you believe Romans 8 : 28? Can't you trust Me that this is a blessing in disguise?"

The Lord then reminded Mr. Howells of how, in the intercession for sick people in the village at home, he had been led to challenge death a number of times. Would he be able to challenge it again here on a much larger scale? He had already had one very sharp test since coming to Africa, in which he had been able to prove God again for himself in this respect. It was in an attack of malaria of a very severe form. "I am sure it was allowed just to test this position," he said, "for when you really face this enemy, you can't make that bold challenge unless you are sure where you stand." After many days of unabated fever, which had resisted all ordinary treatment, he was sinking rapidly, and it looked one night as if he would not live till the morning. Mrs. Howells had gone aside for a short while to pray, and while he was alone the Holy Ghost said to him, "Why don't you ask the Father to heal you?" He thought he had, but the Spirit said to him, "You didn't ask believing." "I just turned over in bed," Mr. Howells

said, "and in that moment was healed. I wondered if my wife would know it. Would she have lost her burden? She came back to the room, and the moment she opened the door, she knew something had happened. 'You have been healed,' she said, and I laughed out and told her about it." Three days after that he was out on trek (as they had planned they would be before the fever struck him down), and was perfectly fit; and although he worked and travelled much in malarious districts after that, it never touched him again.

But this time he was faced with death on a large scale. After their tour of the mission stations, Mr. and Mrs. Howells had been invited by Mr. Charles Murray, the son of Dr. Andrew Murray, to visit his station. But they had just been asked to cancel their visit because of the 'flu, which had carried away two of the missionaries and scores of the converts.

At Rusitu it reached the station first. In four days they had a number down, and the heathen said it was a curse from the ancestral spirits, because of the Christians who had broken the Labola. But it soon reached the kraals also, and many were dying. In two or three days, a deputation came up from the chief and asked, "Have you had any deaths?" "No," replied Mr. Howells. "Have you had any?" "Yes, many," they said. "But can't the witch doctors do anything to help you?" "Oh, two of them were among the first to go down." "But what about your ancestral spirits?" "Our fathers never had this illness," they answered, "so their spirits cannot deal with it." "Quite so," returned Mr. Howells, "the witch doctors have failed and the ancestral spirits have failed—but our God has not failed." "Are none of your people going to die then?" they inquired. The Holy Spirit said to His servant, "Tell them that no one can

die on the station." So he answered, "No! Not one will die on the mission station."

"I now had the victory of faith," said Rees Howells, "and the Lord gave guidance about the way to do things. He told me to turn the chapel into a hospital, and to put fires in at night, so that the temperature was kept even. If I had not had those fifteen months of medical training, I should have been at sea; but there was no need to make a mistake. The number of cases increased till about fifty were down at a time.

"A few days later a second deputation arrived. 'Have you had any deaths yet?' was their first question. 'Not one,' I told them. 'Are you going to have any?' 'No. Not one will die on the mission station.' Would I have said that, unless I knew that the Holy Ghost was stronger than death?' 'Well,' they said, 'the chief has sent us to ask whether, if this disease comes, some of us can come to the mission station to escape death.' 'Tell the chief,' I said, 'that any of your people that want to can come to the station. We will look after them, and not one will die. But, remember this—if you come, you must admit that our God is the living God, and that He can help where the witch doctors and the ancestral spirits have failed!' "

A few hours later, he saw a mournful procession wending its way towards the station—five of the worst, Gospel-hardened sinners among the married men! Slowly they came with blankets over their heads and the fear of death on their faces—their wives in the rear, carrying their sleeping mats and drinking cups. "How I praised God for my personal Guide!" he said.

After that dozens of them came up. Mr. Howells worked day and night on the people for three months. Mrs. Howells laboured with him, until she herself succumbed to it. She was desperately ill for eight days,

but one thing Mr. Howells told her—she could not die! At one point he felt that he was touched with it himself, fatigued as he was through lack of sleep and the prolonged trial. But just as he was attending to one of the patients, the Lord spoke to him: "If I can keep death from the station, and you are needed to look-after these sick ones, don't you believe that I can keep the germ from overcoming you?" His faith took hold of it, and he said, "I had the victory that moment. It was then I learnt that hymn, 'In God I have found a retreat', where the last verse says:

A thousand may fall at my side,  
And ten thousand at my right hand,  
Above me His wings are spread wide,  
Beneath them in safety I stand.

I found the Holy Spirit in me was stronger than the 'flu. What it was to live with God in a plague!

"I had two cases which tested me very much," he added. "If the devil could take them, he could take about fifty. I did everything medically for them, but I couldn't move the temperature, no matter what I tried. So I brought them before the Lord, and pleaded His Word. The moment I got victory, their temperatures dropped and they were safe. There was not a single death." Through a region of about twenty miles' radius the news spread that the God of the white man was stronger than death. Conviction of sin took hold of many, and of those who came to the station many found the Saviour. The greatness of the Lord's victory was seen in the fact that after this epidemic was over, in the meetings the whole of one side of the chapel was filled with married men. Mr. Howells said, "I told the Holy Spirit, 'How wonderful You are! You have preached

more to the Africans in this way than through any of my words!' ”

After the revival, some of their men who were full of the Holy Ghost used to go down on trek into Portuguese East Africa, between the mission station and the port of Beira. Some of the people there received blessing, and those who were converted built a little placê of worship, although they had been warned by the Roman Catholics that they must not pray together. One Sunday morning six soldiers marched into the little chapel and took thirty-two of them prisoners, and kept them—men, women and children—in prison for four months. Not one of them would give in; “they had the spirit of the martyrs”. After four months, they released the women and children, but forced them to drink beer. To the six men they said that if they would stop preaching, they also could go out that day. They refused, saying that if they were released, they would preach the next day. They were kept in prison for two years, and four of them died there.

They were questioned and persecuted all the time, because their jailors couldn't understand what it was they had. Their shouts of praise and joy used to annoy them, so they separated Matthew, their leader, and put him in with an old heathen man, a great sinner, who was always in prison. They heard nothing the first or second night, and were delighted that they had stopped the shouting. But the next night it was worse than ever—not only Matthew rejoicing, but the old heathen man shouting praises to God because he had been saved! Matthew caught smallpox in prison. He knew he was going to die, so he called all his friends together and told them he was going to be with the Lord, and that they must stand fast in the faith; then he bade farewell to them, and went home to glory.

Mr. Howells found that the only way to get a permanent footing in that country would be to buy a farm, which was offered them by a Frenchman, costing £1,200. When Timothy, their head teacher at Rusitu, and the others, heard of it, they said, "We will all give a third of our salary to help buy it." Mr. and Mrs. Howells were so touched by their example that they felt, in addition to the 50 per cent of their salary they were already giving, they should give a further thank-offering of £100.

Soon after this, when they were on furlough, Mr. Howells was telling in a Convention about Matthew and what had happened in Portuguese East Africa. He didn't say a word about money, but he hadn't been speaking five minutes before a woman in the hall stood up and said, "I'll pay for that farm." The Lord told Mr. Howells not to take all that money, because she was under the influence of the meeting, so he said to her afterwards, "I don't expect you to give more than I give—£100." Her brother then said he would give £100, and two other people came and said they would give £100 each. He went to Birmingham and again had a gift of £100. He went to Dundee, and one morning under his plate found £100. Again in Glasgow another man said, "If Matthew gave his blood, I'll give you £100." Altogether he had £1,100 in £100 gifts. In the end that actual farm was not bought, but several centres were opened in the territory.

So ended their period in Africa. "It was perfect victory," said Mr. Howells. "I don't think we had anything to cause us an hour's trouble, and for both my wife and myself, they were the six happiest years of our lives."

## *Chapter Twenty-five*

### BUYING OF FIRST ESTATE IN WALES

MR. AND MRS. HOWELLS ARRIVED HOME AT CHRISTMAS, 1920. At the mission headquarters, they said they had never seen a couple come on furlough looking so well. "We've been having six years' holiday," said Mr. Howells, and wanted to start meetings at once! The Council insisted on at least a few weeks' rest, but they found even six weeks hard to bear. When the start was made, it was non-stop for three years. Mr. Howells's testimony of revival created a great stir. Doors opened to him everywhere, and there was tremendous blessing; in fact, to hundreds who heard him, it was something unique. The Council of the Mission recognized the Spirit's working as so unusual that they made him a free lance and asked him to spend five years travelling all over the English-speaking world as God might lead him, and taking his testimony to God's people everywhere. It was the very thing he most wanted to do. "I couldn't think of any position to compare with that," he said, "preaching to tens of thousands of people, and the Lord blessing. Before I was converted, I had it in me to travel the world, and gave that up, and here the Lord was giving it back."

But, once again, the entirely unexpected was to happen. While he was preaching to the large audience at the Llandrindod Convention of 1922, the power was so great that, although he was the first speaker at one meeting, the chairman, Mr. Head, asked him to make an appeal for full surrender. The whole audience—chairman,

speakers and congregation, rose to their feet. The speaker who was to follow, Rev. G. H. Lunn, said that it would be quite out of place for him to give his address, and the meeting closed. Immediately afterwards, a minister asked Mr. Howells and several others to join him for prayer. He put before them the fact of so many young people responding to God's call, and the urgent need of more training facilities in Wales; and he suggested that they ask the Lord for a training college. It never dawned on Mr. Howells that he was to have a part in it. But as they got down to pray, the Lord said to him, "Be careful how you pray. I am going to build a college, and build it through you!" It came as such a shock to him that the only thing he could say was, "If You are really speaking to me, confirm it through the Word," and that night the confirmation came to him through 1 Chron. 28 : 20, 21, where these three promises stood out before him, "Be strong... and do it... for the Lord God will be with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work... of the house of the Lord"; "There shall be with thee... every willing, skilful man, for any manner of service"; and the third from the next chapter (29 : 4), that the Lord would give him a talent of gold, which from the margin of his Scofield Bible he learned was worth £6,150.

As he and his wife prayed this over, it came as a great test. It meant being called away from the very thing that most appealed to them—a world-wide revival ministry; it meant new and large financial burdens, for the Lord told them that they would have to do it by faith, whereas in their present work all finances were provided: and worst of all, having left one son to go to Africa, it would now mean leaving hundreds of spiritual children in Africa.

They were preparing to go to America on a private visit, leaving in three days' time, so they took a bold step. They asked the Lord to seal the new call by sending the very next day the money they would need for the whole trip. It was not an easy request, because there was no reason why people should give them money, knowing they were receiving allowances as missionaries. But the next day the Lord gave them personal gifts amounting to £138, including £50 from a man who had been blessed through Mr. Howells eleven years before, and had told the Lord that if he ever met him again, he would give him that sum. The gifts seemed so sacred to them, that they gave £100 as a thank-offering to the Mission, just as David poured out the water from the well of Bethlehem before the Lord.

While in America they spoke to many congregations and visited well-known centres, such as the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting in New York. But one place, the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, impressed Mr. Howells more than any other. "It was worth going 4,000 miles if only to see that Institute", he said. "Of all the sights, that was the greatest. Nine hundred men and women hand-picked by God." And it was while he was sitting on the platform before speaking, that the Lord finally settled the matter of the College for him. He asked him, "Can I build a College like this in Wales?" "Yes, You can," he answered, "You are God." "But what I am to do, I am to do through man. You are going to tell these young people that I came to dwell in you. Can I build that College through you?" "I believed God that second," said Mr. Howells. "The College was built that second!"

On their return home to Brynamman, together they made a final dedication of themselves to the new call. They went up their favourite Black Mountain, and kneeling there, gave themselves over to the Lord to be

His instruments to raise up a College. All the money they had between them that day was 16s.! One sad consequence was that it meant resigning from the Mission which was a great wrench on both sides. The Council did not want to let them go, and they would not have left the Mission and the co-workers they had learned to love, for anything less than a direct command from God.

They had no idea where the College was to be. Like Abraham, they went out, not knowing whither they went. In the early summer of that year, 1923, a friend offered them his furnished house for a holiday in a sea-side town. They went there expecting to enjoy it, but as soon as they arrived, a curious thing happened. Mr. Howells felt strongly that they should not be there. "I don't know that I ever disliked a place before," he said, "but I told my wife, 'I don't like it here. Let's go to the place my father spoke about—to Mumbles.' I laughed at this, getting a home for nothing and then not wanting it. But the moment we went to Mumbles, I knew it was the place where God wanted us to be." They were in lodgings there for a month, and Mr. Howells spent his time on the cliffs, not to enjoy the sea, but to be alone with God, wondering what the next step was to be.

One morning, two of his friends, Professor Keri Evans and the Rev. W. W. Lewis, met with him for prayer. Hearing that he did not yet know where the College was to be, Mr. Keri Evans suggested Swansea. Wondering if that could be of the Lord, Mr. Howells made a definite request in prayer: "If Swansea is the place, show me the College before I go to Keswick next week"; and the answer came back: "I will show you to-morrow."

The next day, as Mr. and Mrs. Howells were walking along the Mumbles Road, which skirts Swansea Bay, they passed a large estate on the rising ground overlooking the bay, and noticed that the house was vacant.

They went up to the gate, and found the name of the place to be Glynderwen, and as they stood there, the Lord's word came: "This is the College!"

Mr. Howells continues the story in his own words: "What a mansion it looked to me! I had no idea of the value of such a place, but I supposed it would be worth £10,000; and all the money we had between us was two shillings! I remember the impression it made on me—buying a place like that by faith!

"The gardener informed us that Mr. William Edwards, J.P., the draper, was the owner. The Spirit then told me to ask the Lord for a confirmation in the impossible, as a proof that He had spoken; for when God gives a proof like that, you can be sure that it is He and not man. So I asked Him to send to me within two days a man who knew the owner—and we didn't know anyone in Mumbles!

"What were my feelings the next day? Very mixed, because I knew what it would mean to build a college. If I didn't get the proof, then I would be free, and could again enjoy the liberty I had had during the past ten years. On the other hand, if the proof came, I would have to commit myself and take up the fight.

"About ten o'clock the following morning, the local minister called. We had attended his chapel the previous Sunday, when he was away, and hearing we were missionaries, he had come to ask us to tea. 'Do you know Mr. Edwards, the draper?' I inquired. 'Yes,' he said, 'very well.' That was God! But in a moment a dark cloud came over me, and I knew that I should never be free again until that College was built. Only those who have gone the same way can understand what that meant.

"I called to see Mr. Edwards, but I felt as weak as a man recovering from fever. Oh the burden, the heaviness, the very powers of hell seemed against me! The

devil said I was always doing things my own way, with no money and no business training. It seemed as if I hadn't strength to ring the bell. When I told him why I had come, he said, 'Other religious people are after the place, but not the same religion as yours. I am going to London to-day. If you come and see me again, I will consider it.' But he obviously thought a missionary couldn't buy such a building! For one thing, he said, there was a public-house on the estate, and what would I want with a place like that? What moments they were when I left him! Had I done wrong?

"I went to see the property again next day, and while talking to the gardener, he remarked, 'The Catholics have bought this house.' 'Never!' I said. Then the Lord told me, 'That's why I called you to buy this place. I brought you back from Africa to make a test case for Me with the Church of Rome.' They had been responsible for the death of six of our best men in Portuguese East Africa; that was my only touch with them, and everything in me was roused against them. I knew they were buying places near every University, and no one was stopping them; and I realized the Holy Spirit was now saying He would never have allowed the Church of Rome to have power again in this country if He had found men to believe Him; and His word to me was plain: 'I shall be very displeased with you, if they get this property.' In a moment I saw it was a contest with the wealthiest Church in the world, and I said, 'But You haven't given me money.' 'Didn't I promise you a talent of gold?' He replied. 'If you believe, go on your knees here and claim this place.' So I knelt down there on the lawn by the little bridge and claimed it, and declared aloud, 'They will never get this property. I take it for the Lord.'"

A few days later he spoke to Mr. Edwards again, who asked him a direct question. "If I put these other people

off, will you 'close' with me on it?" Mr. Howells knew so little about buying properties that he first had to inquire what that expression meant! He then promised to do so in two weeks, after his return from the Keswick Convention.

While in Keswick, God gave him another marvellous confirmation. An invitation came to preach in Anwoth parish, in Southern Scotland. Faced with such a big decision in Swansea they would not have gone but for the definite guidance of the Spirit. But as soon as they arrived in Anwoth, the lady with whom they stayed, Mrs. Stewart, the widow of the former Consul-General in Persia, told them that in front of their bedroom window scores of the Covenanters had been martyred. "That's God," said Mr. Howells, "the guidance is right again, taking us up here against ourselves, as it were." The following day they were invited to tea with Sir William and Lady Maxwell, at Cardoness House. The first thing he did was to take them to a small room where a framed document hung on the wall. "I am going to show you the most precious Deed in Scotland," he said, "the Deed signed by the blood of the Covenanters."

"When he said that," continued Mr. Howells, "I felt my blood run cold. To think that in Glynderwen the Lord had told me He had brought me back to make a test case with the Church of Rome, and here I was face to face with that Deed. It is a wonder I remained standing on my feet. There were the signatures scrawled in blood as if with bits of stick. When I saw it, I changed altogether, and there wasn't one thing I wouldn't do to vindicate the Holy Spirit. I never felt anything like it before or since. I shed tears that night in my room. I said to the Holy Ghost, 'If it costs my blood, I'll do this for You. If Mr. Edwards asks for £10,000, I'll pay it, and if the Church of Rome puts a match to Glynderwen the

next day and burns it to ashes, I'll say it is the best investment I ever made.' The Spirit of God came on me to fight that Church: it was God's anger in me towards the Church of Rome, keeping those five hundred million souls in darkness on the Continent and elsewhere. I entered into a world where fellowship with people was not to count, the only fellowship was with those martyrs who had laid down their lives for the liberty of the Gospel. When I saw that Deed, the strength of God came into me and changed my body from clay to steel!"<sup>1</sup>

When Mr. Howells returned from Keswick, Mr. Edwards made him a definite offer of Glynderwen for £6,300. "I thought he would have asked more than that," said Mr. Howells, "and meant to accept his offer; but the

<sup>1</sup> Concerning this Deed, Mr. J. Purves, who is the author of *Sweet Believing*, a book on the Covenanters, has kindly sent us the following note:

"Through the Royal Stuarts, their Divine Right of Kings, and their laws and aims in the State Church, the power of Rome overshadowed Scotland almost all of the seventeenth century. At the end of February 1638 the National Covenant was drawn up by spiritual leaders of the land and eagerly subscribed to by many thousands saying, 'In special we detest and refuse the usurped authority of that Roman Antichrist upon the Scriptures of God, upon the kirk, the civil magistrate and conscience of men,' and accordingly setting forth a clear and literal restatement of the Reformed Faith as given in the Confession of Faith of 1580-81. It was the open protest of a nation against Popery, and a reasserting of the Scriptural views of the Gospel of Salvation. It solemnly pledged all who signed it to promote evangelical doctrine and discipline in all their Scriptural purity.

"Preserved in the Museum of the Corporation of Edinburgh is the great original, a parchment of deerskin with 3,250 names and initials on it, some evidently written in blood. It was subscribed in Greyfriars Churchyard, Edinburgh, February 28, 1638. Copies of this National Covenant were immediately sent all over the country, even to as far away as London, for signatures. At present there are nearly fifty of those copies known and preserved. It was one of them, greatly treasured, that Mr. Rees Howells saw at Cardoness House, signed by some of those who suffered unto death. Copies prepared for signatures were usually written on large sheets of vellum. The one at Cardoness House is the only printed copy

Lord said, 'No! It was a talent of gold I promised you—£6,150, and not a penny more.' I stood against God in a second, I showed my attitude towards Him, but He didn't say another word, and I knew I wouldn't dare disobey Him. When I questioned his price, Mr. Edwards told me to discuss the matter with his solicitor the next day. But instead, I went to a friend's house in Llanelly, where for two days I neither ate nor drank. What agony I went through, but what lessons I learned! I told God that He had called me to fight the Church of Rome, and here He was quibbling over £150; but He turned it back on me. Hadn't I claimed Glynderwen for Him? Didn't I believe then, that the Catholics wouldn't get it? If the battle had been won in Scotland, could the Holy Ghost ever allow Mr. Edwards to sell the property to anyone else? I was beginning to get strong now. Was Mr. Edwards in the hands of the Holy Ghost? Could the devil induce him to sell it? During the two days I came right through, and what liberty I had! Whatever price the enemy offered, he could never get it. I had heard that Mr. Edwards was a great business man, but I had to learn that God could control him. I came to the place where I knew that whenever God wants to take over a property, the owner has very little to do with it.

"When I returned home, I received a letter from Mr. Edwards saying that all negotiations were off. As I had not gone to the solicitor, I had proved that I was not a

whose existence is known of that great document, which when read in the churches of 1638 'was heartily embraced, sworn and subscribed with tears and great joy.'

"I am indebted to Colonel F. Rainsford-Hannay of Cardoness House for so kindly furnishing details showing the authenticity of the Cardoness copy of the National Covenant on which the honoured names of peer and commoner are set side by side. Mrs. Rainsford-Hannay is a daughter of the late Sir William and Lady Maxwell who entertained Mr. Rees Howells at Cardoness House."

business man, and he would sell to the other people, who were offering him £10,000.

"I was not affected by the letter, because the Unseen Captain had taken over, and the responsibility was not mine any longer. I wrote Mr. Edwards and told him quite plainly that it was much harder for me to refuse his offer of £6,300 than to accept it; but God had said I was not to go above £6,150, and after spending two days with Him neither eating nor drinking, He had confirmed His word to me. I had a letter by return, saying that he would drop the price £500! He refused to make a single penny on it. Wasn't that God?"

When the agreement had been signed, Mr. Howells had ten days in which to pay the deposit. On the day he was due to go to the solicitor with the money, he was £140 short. He was still this sum short when the actual hour arrived, so in faith he set off to the office without it. He hadn't been there long when Mrs. Howells arrived. She had followed him down with the post, and in it were three cheques, which made up the £140 to the penny.

But the real battle came over the full sum to be paid. He had never dealt in large amounts before, and the burden was great upon him. He was to take no meetings, nor make any appeals. His eyes were to be on God alone. He gave himself to prayer, spending his days in his little upstairs bedroom in his mother's home, alone with God and His Word from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., when he took his first meal. In the evenings he continued in prayer with his newly-found prayer-partner, Mr. Tommy Howells. Ten months were spent in this way until the victory was complete.

It was during this time that God established for him the principles of faith in finance which were to govern all his future large-scale dealings in the purchase of properties, and their upkeep. At that time, George Müller was the

only man he knew of who had done the same thing before—with no council, no denomination, not making his needs known, and shut in with God alone. Mr. Howells found him a very great help in proving that the promises of God were reliable to step out on. Indeed he said that the only two books which he found could help him through this critical period were the Bible and Müller's autobiography, and he was often encouraged by thinking, "It must be true, because Müller did it." He was determined not to go beyond what Müller did, which was not to buy or build until he had three-quarters of the money.

But in his daily pleadings with the Lord for the promised talent of gold, the Spirit reminded him of something else—the book of Haggai. When the Jews had begun to build the second temple, and the work had stopped through the accusations of their enemies, the Lord through Haggai told them to go on and build, though they were in great poverty; and it was then God said to them: "The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine" (Hag. 2 : 8). When they began to build on the strength of that promise, in faraway Babylon, God stirred King Darius to look up the records of what Cyrus had promised them, and to send them all they needed (Ezra 6).

After facing Mr. Howells with this passage, the Lord said, "If you believe I am the owner of the silver and gold, as you build, I will give you whatever is needed." In other words, the Lord was leading His servant differently from Müller. He was not to wait until he had threequarters of the money, but he was to go straight ahead, and not expect a deliverance from God to-day for a need of to-morrow. The Lord had taught him years before in small things that "the promises of God are equal to current coin," and that, therefore, he must act on the promises as he would if he actually had the cash. But he never thought he would be called to apply it on

this large scale. It meant many severe tests, and he did not hesitate to use normal business methods of advances from the bank when guided to do so. But the proof that God has been with His servant in this way as He was with George Müller in another, is that there are no debts or mortgages to-day on estates whose present value is about £100,000.

But to return to the purchase of Glynderwen. The next sum asked for was £2,000. The Lord sent gifts varying from 5s. to £300 during the next three months, but when he still only had £1,700, the solicitor suddenly called for it to be paid by eleven o'clock the next morning. At first he was baffled a bit, as to why the Lord had allowed this sudden demand to be made. He was walking down Wind Street in Swansea, and as he came under the bridge, the word came to him, "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah are everlasting resources." It was a word from heaven to him, and he believed that by eleven o'clock the next morning he would be passing back under that bridge having the money with him. He had a train to catch, and finding an empty carriage, he got down on his knees and praised the Lord. He could have danced for joy, he said. The next morning he had the £300. The woman who sent it told him afterwards that she had a great burden for him during the very half-hour that he believed. It was so heavy on her, that she had to close her shop and post the money off to him. He was able to pay the £2,000 that day and have £18 to the good!

Glynderwen had been the home of Sir Charles Eden, an uncle of the Right Honourable Anthony Eden. The estate consisted of a mansion and eight acres of land, also the public-house. The property had been laid out in lawns, gardens and a tennis court with a lovely view of Swansea Bay and Mumbles. During the testing days, before the £2,000 was paid, an offer came to buy from.

Mr. Howells the public-house, and four acres of land attached to it. No new liquor licence had been granted in Swansea for many years, so the licence alone was worth over £1,000, and acceptance would have supplied the extra money needed at that time. It was the first serious temptation in finance, to take an easy way of deliverance; but there was no possibility of compromise on principle. The offer was turned down, the public-house closed, and the value of the licence forfeited. Also the licensee was compensated for clearing out. Fair is fair to all—saints and publicans alike! Then by the addition of eight rooms, the public-house itself was converted into a men's hostel.

The whole property was placed in the hands of three trustees, who stood together in this venture of faith; they were the late Rev. W. W. Lewis, a well-known and respected minister in Swansea; Mr. Henry Griffiths, who was then the confidential clerk of the Great Mountain Colliery Company, and is now a Group Accountant of the National Coal Board; and the third was Mr. Howells.

Mr. Edwards, the former owner, became very friendly with Mr. Howells, and in later years gave gifts to the work. He told him, "I couldn't sell the property to anyone else." When the completed account was received, with about twenty items on it, including solicitor's charges, and the sum paid to the licensee of the public-house, the total came to £6,150 7s. 4d.—a talent of gold plus 7s. 4d!

The opening of the College was on Whit-Monday, 1924, and crowds came to hear the story of what God had done during that great period of commercial embarrassment and scarcity of money. About a thousand people gathered. "I remember how God tested me," said Mr. Howells. "We hadn't a tent or a building then sufficient to hold a crowd, and the meetings would have to be in the open air. It had been raining nearly all the

week before. I had ordered hundreds of chairs from the Corporation. On the Sunday I had the victory that the Whit-Monday would be fine. It was a perfect day. I told the people there would not be a drop of rain till they arrived home that day." One of the future tutors of the College, a Greek and Hebrew scholar, the Rev. Llynfi Davies, M.A., B.D., testified later how he came down to that meeting a modernist, and went back a believer. Failing to find any committee or religious body behind it, the Press called it "God's College"—a happy title!

## *Chapter Twenty-six*

### THE BIBLE COLLEGE OF WALES

**F**OR THE FIRST TWELVE MONTHS AFTER THE OPENING of the College everything was a great success. There were five tutors and thirty-eight students; news of the College was in all the South Wales papers, and at the end of the first session a Convention was held which was attended by about forty ministers. But no work of God can become established unless it goes through the fire. Just because of its rising popularity, God had to take the College into death, so that it should have none to trust in except Himself; just as years before, He had taken His servant personally from popularity and the public eye into the hidden walk which few understood.

During the summer vacation the Lord had been showing Mr. Howells that He was not entirely satisfied with the College. There was worldliness among the students and unwillingness for the standards of faith and surrender which the Holy Spirit had said were to be presented and maintained in the College. The Lord warned him that trouble was coming, but that through it He would purge the work, to His own glory. Even so, it was not realized quite how severe the test would be.

Shortly after the opening of the second session there arose a sharp internal conflict, which ultimately reduced the personnel to a staff of two and five students. There would be no profit after these thirty years in attempting to go into details. Wounds in the body of Christ are always grievous, and put us in the dust at the feet of Him

who died to make us one. Yet God has wonderful ways of bringing good out of evil, and He did that for the College. So far as Mr. Howells himself was concerned, God gave him one definite word: "Where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth", and he would not allow a word to be spoken to him against those who had left. The Lord recalled the position He had brought him to of being able to love the missionary in Madeira, and, without needing weeks to come up to it this time, he found he was able to pray for God's blessing as much on those who had left as on those who had remained.

For twelve months they didn't have a single lecture, and many thought the College would never rise again. But the time was spent shut in with God in prayer, and they were able to prove that the work did not depend on human support or popularity. "Through this experience," said Mr. Howells, "the College was put on the Rock of Ages; on a foundation that no man nor devil could ever shake." Remarkably enough they had seldom had big gifts up till then, but from that time onwards God began to send in larger sums of money.

Five years later, for the fifth anniversary, on Whit-Monday, 1929, Mr. Howells published the first printed report. In it he said:

We want to give you a brief account of what has been accomplished during the last five years through faith and believing prayer. Thousands were watching the outcome of this venture of faith—a College without a committee, council, denomination, or a wealthy person behind it. No appeal was to be made for finance; one of the chief aims was to strengthen the faith of God's people by giving a visible proof that He is the living and faithful God... The needs of the College as it stands to-day run up to nearly £5 a day (nearly £35 a week). During the last three years it has been a rare case to have means in hand to meet

our necessities for three days together. It has been the Father's will to teach us the way to trust Him each morning for the day's need, to give a practical demonstration of the words: Give us this day our daily bread. These years have been a time of great financial embarrassment in the world; scarcity of money and financial pressure have made men's hearts to fail, and many have not been able to stand the strain: but the Lord has been proving to us day by day, that living faith is above circumstances; no delays can discourage it, no loss of friends nor depression in trade can touch it.

During this period the Lord has allowed us to be tested beyond our strength; often pressed out of measure, above strength... that we should not trust in ourselves. Our faith has grown with the work, and we have proved over and over again that all the testings have been for the purpose of strengthening it. If we were able a few years ago to take the challenge to build a College when we only had two shillings, and by now have received £8,000, without a single appeal, this in itself is a great encouragement to trust still more.

We have six tutors on our staff, four of them having taken their degrees in different universities of our country; the other two are outstanding ministers in the town. We have thirty students in the College, men and women, who have been called by the Holy Ghost, and have gladly entered the school of faith. Tuition is given free, and the board and residence made as low as possible. Through the gifts sent in to the College in answer to believing prayer, we have been able to give it for nearly half the actual cost.