

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

4th November, 1740—July, 1755

BOYHOOD

Page

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Early Childhood | 1 |
| 2 | At Westminster School | 6 |

CHAPTER II

July, 1755—June, 1762

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN

- | | | |
|---|--|----|
| 3 | James Morris | 17 |
| 4 | "The Blessed Year, 1758." His First Volume | 20 |
| 5 | Toplady and his Mother return to England | 28 |
| 6 | Romaine and Gill | 30 |

CHAPTER III

13th June, 1762—June, 1765

BLAGDON AND FARLEY HUNGERFORD

- | | | |
|---|---|----|
| 7 | Blagdon, June, 1762—June, 1764 | 38 |
| 8 | Duke Street, May, 1764; Farley Hungerford, June, 1764—
June, 1765. | 46 |

CHAPTER IV

May, 1766—April, 1768

HARPFORD AND FEN OTTERY

- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| 9 | Harpford and Fen Ottery | 49 |
| 10 | The Diary of 1767—8. Letter to his Mother | 56 |
| 11 | Harpford Vicarage burnt down. 8th March, 1768 | 60 |

CHAPTER V

17th April, 1768—December, 1769

EARLY DAYS AT BROAD HEMBURY

- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| 12 | Broad Hembury and Sheldon. Letter to Morris, 2nd Sept.,
1768 | 64 |
| 13 | <i>The Church of England Vindicated</i> , 13th Feb., 1769 | 69 |

CHAPTER VI		
September, 1769—March, 1770		
THE EXPLOSION		Page
14	Hitchin, Ryland and other friends	74
15	The Translation of Zanchy published, Nov., 1769. The Struggle with Wesley, March, 1770	84
CHAPTER VII		
March, 1770—December, 1771		
THE BROAD HEMBURY HYMNS		
16	Death of his Mother. April, 1770	92
17	Broad Hembury Hymns	98
18	Rock of Ages	104
CHAPTER VIII		
17th July, 1771—December, 1771		
THE ATTACKS OF OLIVERS AND OTHERS		
19	The Feathers Tavern Association, 17th July, 1771. A Shaft from Olivers	109
20	Death of Dr. Gill, 14th October, 1771	113
21	The Pamphlet War	115
CHAPTER IX		
THOMAS OLIVERS AND DR. JOHNSON		
22	Toplady at the Foundery, 8th April, 1773	119
23	The Dinner at Dilly's, 7th May, 1773.	127
CHAPTER X		
THE SALON IN BERNERS STREET		
24	Mrs. Macaulay, May, 1773	131
25	Was Toplady ever in love?	138
26	Serle and Romaine at Broad Hembury, September, 1773	141
CHAPTER XI		
January, 1774—May, 1774		
LAST DAYS AT BROAD HEMBURY		
27	Death of the Rev. Edward Hitchen, 11th January, 1774	148
28	Lord Chesterfield's Letters, Spring, 1774	149
29	Mrs. Macaulay again, Spring, 1774	152
30	The Green Curtain, May, 1774	156
31	<i>The Historic Proof</i>	158
CHAPTER XII		
May, 1774—September, 1775		
SOME HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED LETTERS		
32	John Wesley as pictured by Toplady.	161
33	The Calvin Snuff-box	164

CONTENTS.

ix

CHAPTER XIII

September, 1775—August, 1776

TOPLADY IN LONDON. EDITOR OF THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE Page

34	Orange Street Chapel. Toplady as Preacher	174
35	Toplady as an Essayist	185
36	<i>Psalms and Hymns</i> , 26th July, 1776.	188
37	Toplady relinquishes the Editorship of the <i>Gospel Magazine</i> , August, 1776	191

CHAPTER XIV

August, 1776—17th March, 1777

FRIENDSHIP WITH LADY HUNTINGDON

38	At Trevecca, 24th August, 1776	194
39	Another Sellon	196
40	The Painted Lady	198
41	"Remember Dr. Dodd!" 17th March, 1777	204

CHAPTER XV

THE YEAR 1778

42	Last Visit to Broad Hembury, 17th March, 1778	208
43	At Newport Pagnell	212
44	Last Appearance at Orange Street, 4th June, 1778	213
45	His Death Song	218
46	Last Hours. Death. 11th August, 1778	222

CHAPTER XVI

THE LAST DAYS OF TOPLADY'S FRIENDS AND OPPONENTS

47	Deaths of Gifford and Ryland	230
48	Last Days of Madan, Serle, Romaine and Olivers	235
49	Of the Rupture between Dr. Wilson and Mrs. Macaulay	238
50	Conclusion	241

HYMN WRITERS CONTEMPORARY WITH TOPLADY.

		<i>Page</i>
1	Adams, John	245
2	Aldridge, William	247
3	Alotli	247
4	Beddome, Benjamin	248
5	Berridge, John	252
6	Brewer, Jehoida	260
7	Clarke, W. Augustus	261

	<i>Page</i>
8 De Courcy, Richard	262
9 Fanch, James	262
10 Fawcett, John	263
11 Fellows, John	265
12 Harrison, Susanna	266
13 Huntingdon, Countess of	267
14 J. S.	268
15 Knight, Joel Abraham	269
16 Langford, John	270
17 Langley, John Henry	270
18 Madan, Martin	270
19 Matlock, John	272
20 Needham, John	272
21 Ryland, John Collett	273
22 Scott, Elizabeth	274
23 Scott, Thomas	274
24 Shirley, Walter	275
25 S. P.	276
26 S. P. R.	276
27 Steele, Anne	276
28 Stennett, Samuel	279
29 Stocker, John	282
30 Tucker, William	283
31 Turner, Daniel	285
32 Wallin, Benjamin	286
33 Wingrove, John	287
34 W-gt-n, J.	287

APPENDICES.

1 Bibliography of Augustus M. Toplady	289
2 Works by Various Persons published by Toplady	292
3 Articles by Toplady which appeared in <i>The Gospel Magazine</i> subsequent to his death	292
4 List of Toplady's Letters	293
5 <i>Chamber Studies</i>	296
6 Dates of Toplady's Sermons	299
7 Additional Notes respecting Joseph Hart	303

LIST OF PLATES

	<i>Facing page</i>
Frontispiece	32
Toplady's Birthplace	32
The Rock of Ages	39
Blagdon Church	39
Rev. Francis Luce	42
Portion of Letter by Toplady	49
Farley Hungerford Church—exterior	49
" " interior	50
Harpford Church	50
Fen Ottery Church.	63
Rev. Dr. Gill	63
Rev. Martin Madan	64
Broad Hembury Village	80
Rev. John Collett Ryland	80
Thomas Olivers	97
Broad Hembury Church	112
Rev. Edward Hitchin, B.D.	112
Rev. Andrew Gifford	129
Rev. Dr. Baker	144
Mrs. Macaulay	176
Orange Street (Map)	176
Orange Street Chapel Interior	193
Orange Street Chapel Exterior	193
Orange Street Chapel Interior in 1910	198
Facsimile of Toplady's Handwriting: Sermon on Isa. xi. 11,	203
Statue of Mrs. Macaulay	225
Metal Plate affixed to Casket found in Toplady's grave	225
The Tablet at Whitefield's.	240
The Memorial at Farnham Church	240
The Memorial at Broad Hembury	257
Hymn-writers Contemporary with Toplady	272
" " " "	

PREFACE

TOPLADY'S fame rests chiefly on his celebrated hymn, "Rock of Ages," but he was also the author of other very beautiful hymns, and of many sermons and essays—to say nothing of his controversial works, which abound in golden and life-giving passages. He was one of the very greatest sons of the Church of England. But if his own Church holds him in honour, so also, owing to the soundness of his teaching, and to the warm-hearted friendship that subsisted between him and such men as Ryland and Gill, do a vast number of the Non-conformists. His most bitter opponents were the Wesleyans, but the descendants of these opponents have long since come to speak of him without asperity, and they yield to none of the Churches in their admiration of the best of his hymns. The 18th century is to English hymnology what the Augustan age is to Latin literature, and what the Elizabethan age is to the drama. By the side of such names as Watts, Hart, Toplady, Charles Wesley, Doddridge, Cowper, and Newton, the names of all hymn-writers, previous or subsequent, look pale indeed. The 19th century did not produce a single man worthy to be mentioned in the same breath with any one of the immortal seven. It produced hymns, but no hymnwriter. None whose individuality has shaken the peoples, who has become a cult, whose name is as spikenard poured forth.

Toplady not only wrote a hymn that has gone beyond the work of any other man; he also wrote at least three other hymns that are among the best in our language, and many more that hold high places in the second rank. It is a favourite sport with our peddlers in verse—our makers of jingle and doggerel—to cast at the eighteenth century giants that some of their rhymes are defective. There are defective rhymes in nearly all the great hymns, whether by Toplady or any other. It is only the poetaster whose lines are absolutely smooth. While the words, hissing hot or trembling with emotion, pour from the ecstasied or over-wrought soul, the question of an exact

rhyme becomes a ludicrously minor one. The writer seeks to express his devotional fever, and he succeeds. When Christian is in deadly strife with Apollyon, when darts fly thick and the ground is slippery with scales, blood and spume, his chief thought is not whether the coat on his back is of the latest cut from Paris. Indeed he is so busy with his adversary that he does not know whether he has a coat or a back either. In a quieter moment he can polish his stanza, that is if his stanza admits of polish; but he will in no case sacrifice his original meaning, or weaken even so little as a single line, just for the purpose of tickling the foolish ear of the peddler or the dilettante. Compare these eighteenth century giants with the majority of the nineteenth and twentieth century hymn-writers—men as a rule with no inspiration, no prophetic fervour, no individuality, who sit down and write in cold blood a pretty jingle, or some sickly sentiment which does good neither to themselves nor to anybody else. They call it a hymn. Its rhymes are perfect. Attractive tunes are made for it. It is sung in a thousand churches by complacent people who would sing any inept effusion that might be selected. But life is not all make believe. There come times of pain and suffering. There comes old age. And when men seek real comfort, they quit these sickly sweetmeats, these rattles, these coloured balloons at the end of a string—they quit all these follies, and go back to "Rock of Ages," "God moves in a mysterious way," "Our God, our help in ages past," "There is a land of pure delight," "Glorious things of thee are spoken," "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," and the rest of the glorious inspirations of the eighteenth century—they repudiate all music except the blast of God's trumpet. And here I would say one word about hymn-books—or rather about a particular book—*Hymns Ancient and Modern*—the one most in use, I suppose, in the Church of England. It contains a number of fine hymns, but among them a mass of futility that makes one blush for human nature. I know of no finer sight than that of a huge congregation kneeling to repeat the classic words of our splendid Church Service—say, for example, the General Thanksgiving; I know of few sadder sights than to see that same congregation rise to sing:

“ Was it he beneath the fig-tree
 Seen of Thee, and guileless found ;
 He who saw the good he long'd for,
 Rise from Nazareth's barren ground ? ”¹

Think of the precipitous and fearful descent from the noble and beautiful wording of the Liturgy to this purile and wretched piece of doggerel ! When the new² edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* appeared, I found to my relief that Ellerton's lines had disappeared. I was glad to see that “ For all Thy saints,” &c. (St. James the Apostle's day), had also gone ; but in place of it there appears something even worse—a feeble piece of jingle by J. H. Newman, beginning, “ Two brothers freely cast their lot.” Imagine even a moderately intelligent, to say nothing of a refined congregation, singing such contemptible stuff ! On the whole, the new edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* is no better than the old, though it has certainly benefited by the inclusion of Joseph Hart's “ Come, Holy Spirit, come.” Both editions are murdered by the absurd “ hymns ” appointed for saints' days, which in reality are not hymns at all, but narratives in verse, such as one might teach to rather dull little children sitting on a low form. Now if we are to have special hymns for special days and seasons—and there is much to be said for the custom—let us have really fine hymns. If there are not any written specially for a particular day, it would be well to use one of the “ General Hymns,”³ and wait till a true poet comes forward to fill the gaps. These “ hymns ” for saints' days are a by-word and a derision among intelligent men and women. Beautiful hymns have been written by Charles Wesley, Keble and others for the greater festivals. Hardly any have as yet been written for the saints' days. The truth is, *Hymns Ancient and Modern*—if it is to continue in use—wants thorough revision ; and there should be more hymns—not fewer than a thousand—for it is possible to get heartily tired even of good hymns. The Church of England has, under this head, much to learn from the Nonconformists, whose books are much larger and far better edited than the various Church hymnals. If a number of men of religion and taste were to meet together, they should have no difficulty in deciding upon the best forty or fifty hymns in the language,

¹ A. & M., No. 419, v. 3.

² The old edition is still in use in most churches.

³ E.g., Newton's “ Begone Unbelief ” for St. Thomas's Day

and these forty or fifty ought to be included in every selection. If these could be found in the Church hymnals there would not be so much cause for complaint. But they do not. What are we to say of a selection that forces upon us the flaccidities respecting the "Fig-tree" and the "Two brothers," but cannot find room for Toplady's "Your harps, ye trembling saints," and "A debtor to mercy alone," or "K.'s" glorious outburst, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord!"? Why, we can only say this, that either the compilers of the last two editions of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* never heard of three hymns which for power, sound doctrine and poetry, rank among the first ten or fifteen in the language, or that they prefer to them the "Fig-tree," the "Two brothers," and other J. Ellerton and J. H. Newman precosities. The best of our hymns are worthy to be sung even amid our fine Liturgy. The Bible is the noblest prose work in the language; the beauty of the greater part of the Prayer Book appeals to all Christians, whether in the Church or out of it. We use the highest in prose, let us use only the highest in poetry. If a clergyman does not see his way to change his hymn-book, he could at least print a selection, consisting of say twenty or thirty of the best excluded hymns, and use them in his parish as a kind of supplement. The cost would be trifling. In these days of education, every intelligent person knows poetry from doggerel. Moreover, I maintain that it is an insult to the Deity to offer Him dross when we possess a whole Golconda of neglected gold. I write these words in no rancorous spirit, but with the devout wish that they may assist to bring about the removal from our services of a shameful blemish. I could devote pages to the subject of the mutilation of hymns by incompetent compilers, but I will do no more just now than express my deep regret that so many of our best hymns—including some of Toplady's—have been altered and spoilt.

In the following pages will be found a very large number of new facts respecting Toplady; so many indeed, that to most readers he will stand out as an entirely new character; and I have corrected many of the errors into which my predecessors have fallen. For example, it has been said over and over again that Toplady "was inducted to the living of Blagdon;" and the Rev. S. Baring-Gould repeats the error, in an unhappy

article which appeared in the *Treasury* even so late as October, 1908. Toplady was only curate of Blagdon. I have given a number of interesting, and hitherto unpublished, particulars concerning the friendship between Toplady and Ryland, Gill, Hitchin and Mrs. Macaulay.

The new information has been derived chiefly from the following unpublished manuscripts in Toplady's handwriting:—

1. A MS. of which the title-page runs: "Collectanea hæecce Miscella, tam Anglica, quam Latina ex variis Autoribus desumpta, Literis dare inceptit ad Blagdon in comitatu de Somerset in proprium usum Augustus Toplady, 1762." Two leaves folio and fragments.

2. A MS. entitled, "Concerning Free Will." Twenty-six pages quarto.

3. Life of the Apostle Paul. One leaf folio.

4. Life of Archbishop Laud. Seven leaves folio.

5. De Servo Arbitrio. From the Latin of Martin Luther. Two leaves folio.

6. Translation of Witsius's "Animadversions." One leaf folio.

7. Toplady's Common-place Book. One leaf.

8. History of England. Five leaves folio and four octavo.

9. Three incompleted hymns and an imperfect and an unfinished burlesque poem.

10. Ten Letters:

To William Lunell, Dublin, March, 1764.

„ William Lunell, Dublin, 25th Jan., 1767.

„ Mr. Grey (respecting the fire at Harpford Vicarage),
15th June, 1768.

„ Mr. George Flower, 1st Oct., 1773.

„ Rev. Erasmus Middleton, 5th Feb., 1775.

„ William Hussey, 7th April, 1775.

„ John Evans, 25th July, 1775.

„ Rev. J. W. Fletcher (N.D.)

„ William Tucker, 20th August, 1776.

„ A Gentleman (N.D.)

11. Memoirs of Albona, a very worthy old gentleman, supposed to be in the last stage of a consumption. Unfinished and unpublished. It is a very feeble production. Albona is, of course, England, who is at variance with her neighbour Galla.

Part is in the possession of the Rev. W. B. Bunting, Porlock, and part is in my own possession.

12. Part of the MS. of Toplady's "Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England." (Works, Vol. 1, pp. 406, 407.)

13. Three speeches delivered by Toplady, probably at the Queen's Arms, Newgate Street.

14. Notes of ninety-four sermons—fifty dated and forty-four undated. For lists see Appendix.

15. A large number of miscellaneous fragments.

16. Two common-place books (bound in one vol.), written in 1759, while Toplady was at Trinity College, Dublin. One is a collection of citations from Calvin and other writers, the other Toplady's notes on astronomy, logic, &c.

17. Book of Original Prayers for every Morning and Evening of the Week. These are different from the prayers in "A Course of Family Prayer for each Day in the Week," published in Toplady's Works, Vol. 5, pp. 474—506, and as a separate work (11th edition, 1829). At the end are "Prayers on behalf of Sick Persons," and the prayer quoted on p. 41 of the present work. The volume was evidently written at Blagdon about 1763.

The greater part of Numbers 1 to 15 belong to me. For the loan of Nos. 16 and 17, I have to thank Mr. C. H. Willis Johnson, 19 Abingdon Street, Westminster, great-grandson of Toplady's friend, Rev. C. Johnson, Vicar of South Stoke, near Bath. The following manuscripts and books have also been of great service to me:—

1. "Chamber Studies for every Sunday in the Year, Morning and evening," being 104 Meditations by Toplady. The handwriting appears to be that of Mr. Walter Row, Toplady's friend and literary executor. This manuscript is preserved in the Cowper Museum at Olney.

2. Volume of Toplady's Sermons and other Works, with many MS. notes respecting Toplady in the handwriting of the Rev. John Ryland. Kindly lent to me by Mr. William Wileman, of Kilburn.

I wish to express my hearty thanks to the following ladies and gentlemen who have helped me in different ways:

Alexander, Rev. George, Birkenhead.

- Ambrose, Rev. Mr., Bourton-on-the-Water.
 Bagster, Miss Florence, Kendal, for copy of the letter to her great-grandfather, Mr. William Tucker, of Chard.
 Bagster, Mr. Robert.
 Batt, Mr. William.
 Baker, Rev. R. W. (great-grandson of Toplady's friend, Rev. Dr. Baker), Tellisford Rectory, Bath.
 Baker, Mr. G. E., 74 Banbury Road, Oxford.
 Bunting, Rev. W. B.
 Coxeter, Mr. E. B.
 Farncombe & Son, Messrs., Croydon, Notes in Toplady's hand-writing inserted in one of his works.
 Fleeming, Mr. W. Lowe, Wolverhampton, for copies of unpublished letters by Toplady.
 Heffer, Mr. R., Saffron Walden.
 Hooper, Mr. T. R., Redhill.
 James, Rev. C. Lister, Vicar of Broad Hembury.
 Johnson, Mr. C. H. Willes, Westminster.
 Lambrick, Rev. Menzies, Rector of Blagdon.
 Lancefield, Rev. Arthur P., Vicar of Harpford and Rector of Fen Ottery.
 Librarian, The, Museum, Leicester.
 Lightwood, Mr. James T.
 Lock, Mr. Joseph.
 Lush, Rev. William.
 Meehan, Messrs. B. & J. F., Bath.
 Manley, Mr. H., Exeter, for Toplady manuscripts.
 Manager, The, Sun Insurance Company.
 Masters, Rev. W. E., Pastor of Orange Street Chapel.
 Mason, Miss M. C. N., Farnham, Surrey, photographs of Toplady's birthplace and memorial.
 M'Curry, Mr. S. S., Glenageary, Kingston, Ireland.
 Patterson, Mr. Thomas, Farnham, Surrey.
 Panes, Mr. John N., Hertford College, Oxford.
 Parkinson, Mr. W. C., Hornsey, N.
 Pierpoint, Mr. Robert, Gloucester Place, W.
 Provost, The, Trinity College, Dublin.
 Porter, Mr. J. A., Librarian, Church Missionary Society, Salisbury Square, London.
 Robinson, Rev. Frank E., Baptist College, Bristol.

- Styles, Rev. W. Jeyes, for loan of books.
 Thomson, Rev. H. B., Fulham, London, S.W.
 Trelawny-Ross, Rev. Dr. J. T.
 Wallington, Mr. A., Librarian, Methodist Publishing House,
 London, E.C.
 Whittome, Mr. Joseph.
 Wileman, Mr. William.
 Wilkinson, Mr. R., Trowbridge.
 Wright, Mr. Jabez, Ipswich.
 Wright, Mr. W. A. E., Leyton.

I have been indebted in various ways to the following works:

1774—1834. *The Gospel Magazine*, which during this period contains a great amount of information respecting Toplady.

1778. "Rev. Mr. Toplady's Dying Avowal of his Religious Sentiments." Six editions published that year.

1778. "Memoir of some Principal Circumstances in the Life and Death of the Rev. A. M. Toplady." 3rd edition, 1779.

1794. "Memoirs of the late Rev. Mr. Toplady . . ." with a brief Examination of his Works. 8vo. Price 3/-, sewed. Pages 139. Row, Great Marlborough Street, 1794. 3rd ed., 1826.

1794. "A Course of Prayer for each Day of the Week." . . . Printed from the Manuscripts of the late Rev. Augustus Toplady. 8vo. Pages 35. Price 6d. Row, &c.

N.D. "The Gleanings of the Vintage," being several Essays and Meditations selected from the Manuscripts of Periodical Papers, and written by the late Rev. Augustus Toplady, . . . with a recommendatory Preface by Henry Peckwell, D.D. One shilling. 8vo.

1820. *Memoirs of Rev. Theophilus Lindsey*, by Rev. T. Belsham.

1821. "Devotional Retirement Recommended and Enforced, with Meditations and Remarks, to which is prefixed an Essay on the Character of Job, by Augustus Toplady." This is the 6th edition.

1825. "The Works of Augustus M. Toplady, A.B.," in six vols.

1832. "Essay on the Character and Writings of Mr. Toplady," by G. Watkins, LL.D.

1833. "Memoirs of Rev. Joseph Priestley. (Centenary Edition).
1835. "Rylandiana," by W. Newman, D.D.
1841. Sydney's "Life of Sir Richard Hill," and Review of it in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, May, 1841.
1855. "Autobiography of Rev. William Jay."
1856. "Hymns . . . by the late Rev. A. M. Toplady," (London: W. H. Collingridge). This is a reprint of pp. 305 to 423 of Vol. 6 of the 1825 ed. of Toplady's Works.
1857. *Gospel Standard*, October, p. 315. Review of Collingridge's Edition of Toplady's Hymns.
1860. "Toplady's Hymns," edited by Daniel Sedgwick; and Notice in *Gospel Advocate*, Vol. 1, p. 128.
1864. "Memorials of Rev. William Bull," by Josiah Bull.
1867. "Memorials of the Clayton Family," by T. W. B. Aveling.
1872. "Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev. A. M. Toplady," by Rev. W. Winters.
1897. "The Three Rylands," by Rev. James Culross, with Preface by W. Ryland Dent Adkins, M.P.
1899. *Gospel Magazine*, May. Toplady Number.
1907. *Gospel Magazine*, May. Article on "Toplady's Country," by Rev. George Alexander.
1908. "The Churches of Harpford and Fen Ottery," by Rev. Arthur P. Lancefield.
1910. February and March. Articles on Orange Street Church. *Christian World*.
1910. The *Beacon*, August. Article on Catharine Macaulay; a Bath Queen, by J. F. Meehan.
1910. "Dictionary of National Biography." Article on Toplady, by Rev. Canon Leigh Bennett.
1910. "Broad Hembury Church." Article issued privately. By Rev. C. Lister James.
1910. *Devon and Exeter Daily Gazette*, 12th August, 1910. Article by Rev. A. P. Lancefield.

NOTE.—In these pages when reference is made to Toplady's Works, the edition of 1825, in 6 volumes, is intended.