

**OUR ETHEL: A
POLISHED
CORNER-STONE**

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Our Ethel: a polished corner-stone by Caroline Woolmer Leakey

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CAROLINE WOOLMER LEAKEY

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BY THE AUTHOR OF
"GOD'S TENTH," "I CAN'T STAY HERE,"
ETC., ETC.



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1876.

211. f. 28

Introduction and Dedication.



THE poet may remind us how life may be made sublime; but perhaps it is more to the purpose for every-day-people to learn how to make every-day-life happy. The means of acquiring this knowledge is "very nigh unto us," even in our hands: the Bible, God's blessed Word, is the grand source of instruction on this point; but flowing from and leading back to it are lesser and tributary streams, that the Lord condescends to use in His service, and often honours with His gracious favour. Amongst such streams, Christian Biographies may be classed. There

are the grand rivers, bearing onward the records of Martyn, Wilberforce, Elizabeth Fry; there are the broad rivers, plain, useful, hardworking lives, that remind us of the earnestness, if not of the sublimity of our present existence; then there are the streams and streamlets, that, with little noise but much beauty, wind in and out our path,—telling us of humble duties and homely ministrations quietly performed, each one rendering its meed of service and praise to the Almighty Word that spoke it into life. Such are the Memoirs with which we are all acquainted; for the present sketch, however, the writer only claims a place amongst the smallest streamlets, and will be more than gratefully satisfied if the Lord sends by it one message of love to some young soul, assuring it that a life dedicated to God is a happy life; that a life working for God is

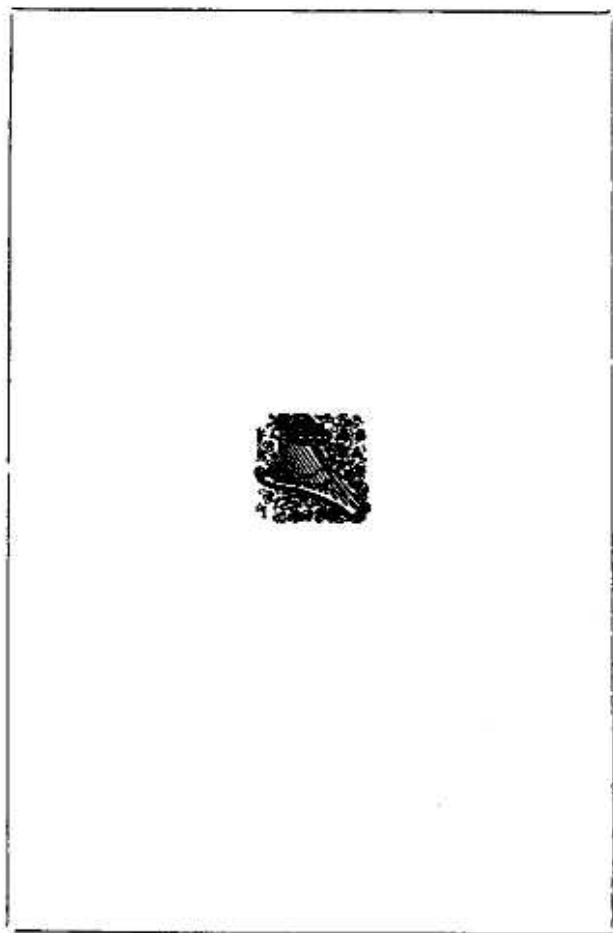
a useful life; and that a life testifying for God in suffering, is both happy and useful, in the highest form of happiness and service!

To any such young seeker for the only true paths of pleasantness and peace,* this little volume is affectionately

Dedicated,

BY ITS WRITER.

* Prov. iii. 17.



OUR ETHEL.



CHAPTER I.

She seemed a stone well polished to adorn
That temple gloriously wrought
For the great King, then by bright angels borne
To fill her place within His court.

"BUT it is already so beautiful; it's a pity to tamper with it: it will adorn a cabinet as it is,—and *well*, too!"

"True sir; but if so beautiful in *this* state, how much more lovely it will be when polished!" And the lapidary, with the fond admiration of a connoisseur, gazed almost tenderly on the rough but rare stone I had brought for his opinion and handiwork. He touched it as he would have touched a delicate

treasure, and as though fain to spare it any needless handling.

Perceiving his hesitation, and fearing it arose from unwillingness to undertake the responsibility of the operation, I inquired,—

“Does it take long to polish stones? I thought it was a very quick and easy process?”

“Ah, sir, that’s just it! Some yield *easily*, and give but little, if any, trouble: they take the polish *at once*; others are stubborn, as we call it, and need the full power of the grind-wheel; and I expect this would be the case with yours, for it is such a beauty!”

“Oh, never mind: I have set my heart on this pebble, and have it I *must*!”

“And *will*, you mean, sir,” added the lapidary, with a pleasant smile.

“Yes: and *will*,” I replied, “whatever it may cost. So with you I leave it. Do as you please with it: all I require is to receive it from you again WELL POLISHED, to adorn my cabinet, where I have prepared a place for it; and the pink wool is already laid in its corner to welcome it home.”