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HOW THEY ENTERED CANAAN  
(A Collection of Holiness Experience Accounts)  
Compiled by Duane V. Maxey

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

**MARY GRANT CRAMER -- (Sister of President U. S. Grant)**

(Mrs. Cramer was for several years my assistant in the Mothers' Meetings, held at Ocean Grove, N. J. The meetings were public, and largely attended, and her Bible readings, and other exercises were highly appreciated and helpful. We copy the first stanza of her favorite song.)

"Lead, kindly light, amid th' encircling gloom,  
Lead thou me on!  
The night is dark and I am far from home;  
Lead thou me on!  
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene, one step's enough for me."

Dear Mrs. Wheeler:

Your kind note, asking that I send you some of my experience for your new book, has just reached me. I confess that I shrink a little in sending such a reply as you desire, because I think it is an unmerited honor for some of my experience to have a place in the book that you are engaged in writing. I would gladly pen something for it, if by so doing I could magnify the name of Him who redeemed me.

"The fear of the Lord was the beginning of wisdom," with me; reading Sunday School books made a wholesome but transient impression upon my youthful mind. My thoughts wandered so during preaching, even after I was grown to maturity, that I was often conscious smitten when reflecting upon the sad fact that I profited but little by the sermons I heard.

My reticence upon religious topics was one of many objections I had to becoming a Christian; fearing that if I did God would require me to urge the unconverted to seek their souls' salvation. In the summer of 1862, I deliberately resolved to seek this blessing, and to gain the witness, if possible, that my sins were forgiven, and my God reconciled, fearing it would be forever too late if postponed any longer. Soon after this I came under deep conviction at a camp meeting near Cincinnati, Ohio; and for eight months I daily sought the forgiveness of my sins, in the meantime confining my reading almost entirely to religious literature.

My Bible and Methodist hymn book were my chief companions. I united with the Methodist Church at the age of fourteen years; this had a restraining influence on me. Having often to assist in entertaining visitors at my father's house who were silent upon religious subjects was a hindrance to my conversion; but through the mercy of God this blessed event occurred the following spring.

On the morning of April 27th I awoke to the joyful consciousness that I was indeed a new creature in Christ Jesus. That was the happiest day I had ever known. I was amazed at the change in myself, and went on my way rejoicing for three months, trying daily to do something for the glory of God. This made me appear peculiar in the eyes of some of my friends, and hearing that a lady was afraid to visit us lest I should speak to her in regard to her spiritual welfare, I felt grieved, and concluded to act more as professing Christians usually did. Fatal resolution! It cost me my happiness and communion with God, but months later both were restored.

A season of sunshine and shadows followed, but the shadows predominated. Far too much of the old self remained for me to be a consistent Christian. This character was still harder for me to maintain in Germany, where my husband resided for three years in an official capacity. But one night while visiting in Bremen, God spoke a prophetic sentence to my soul that deeply impressed and comforted me. I remained under the quickening influence of this impression till after my return to America; but a few years later I needed another quickening and received it while visiting my parents. The same year I returned to my husband in Denmark, where we resided for many years, surrounded by deadening influences, for the world hemmed us in closely on all sides.

Deprived of the privileges of the sanctuary, and rarely meeting among the titled aristocracy, with whom our lot was cast, any person with whom I felt at liberty to hold religious converse. I became discouraged, and tempted to believe that vain must be my efforts to lead a religious life in the Danish Capitol. During the latter part of our sojourn there we met a few persons in high life (and more not belonging to it) who evidently enjoyed speaking about heavenly things. This was especially the case with a lady of high rank, whose conversation with me never took a worldly turn after discovering that we were in religious sympathy with each other.

This was a most agreeable surprise to me, because of the universal impression in Danish society that religious conversations must be avoided. One excuse made to me for this was that religion is too sacred to be talked about; to do so made one appear eccentric. But regardless of this risk two young ladies (sisters) were converted in our house a short time before our departure, and their mother has since found peace in believing in Christ as her Redeemer.

Not finding a gay life at all congenial to my quiet tastes, I became much absorbed in my favorite occupation, painting, and for a few years it was as Lord Radstock told me, my idol. This devoted evangelist preached several times in our house during his lordship's sojourn in Copenhagen, and his Christian counsel had a blessed influence upon me, for I again sought and obtained the Divine favor, enjoying communion with God under peculiar difficulties during the remaining years of our residence abroad.

For nineteen years my Christian life had been on too low a plane; it had been marked with conflicts, and I regret to confess that defeats had been more numerous than victories, though I still

held fast my confidence in God and daily sought His guidance. Believing that He never intended we should alternately advance and recede along the "straight and narrow way," and knowing that many press steadily forward, I resolved by Divine help to do the same. With this heaven-inspired purpose in my soul, I spent the following summer at Ocean Grove, N. J., availing myself of its abundant means of grace. My soul hungered and thirsted after righteousness, and very earnest were my efforts in that sacred locality to get built up in the most holy faith.

The counsel and prayers of advanced Christians were eagerly sought, and often did I bow in humility of soul at the altar of prayer, seeking a clean heart. To have all inbred sin removed. To comprehend with all saints the length and breadth, the height and depth, and to know the love of God which passeth knowledge that I might be filled with all the fullness of God. I longed for the fullness -- all that God was willing to impart. He heard my prayer. I knew it was useless and presumptuous to have a controversy with God, and I fully consecrated soul, body and spirit to Him, and my heart was brought into complete subjection to His power. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," and what a change this power had wrought in my heart.

Instead of shrinking from presenting Christ I longed for opportunities to do or say something for Him, and when you came to me and asked me to assist you in the Mothers' Meetings, I felt, though unworthy, that God had directed you and the meeting was a great help to me. In regard to the Bible readings given at Ocean Grove, it is certainly kind in you and others to think that good came from that; but then it was because the Lord had compassion on me and helped me on that occasion. Praise His holy name!

How quickly the dear Lord opens doors of labor before us when we are prepared to enter them. While spending a week in Auburndale, I met Miss Frances E. Willard. After a little conversation we separated, and very soon I was informed that I had been elected Superintendent of Evangelistic Work in that State for the W.C.T.U. About two hours before I was aware of my appointment I opened the Bible to Joel 3:13: "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down, for the press is full, the fats overflow; for the wickedness is great." I was much impressed with the command in the verse. It seemed like a divine seal upon the work given me to do. Its importance, and my own sense of unfitness for it, would overwhelm and discourage me, but for my faith in God, and I dare not shrink from it after crying to God so long in a foreign land to fit me for service and use me. Perhaps this is his way of answering my prayer.

Your charitable disposition leads you to overrate me. I have no gifts to rely upon, but must look simply to Jesus in this emergency, strengthened by the thought that He often uses the weak things of this world to confound the mighty. The blessed word of God is increasingly precious to me, and I covet a sphere of life that will help me to live for His glory, and to win souls that will shine forever in the Savior's crown.

But should it again be my lot to cross the sea and dwell among strangers, I shall take Jesus with me, and trusting in Him who is mighty to save, I shall expect to be kept faithful, though it be among the faithless, and hope to return again to my native land endued with power from on high, and ready to occupy any place, or perhaps any duty that the Lord in His infinite wisdom may assign me.

Yours in Christ,  
Mary G. Cramer

Since writing the above Mrs. Cramer has gone to her heavenly home, and now her fondest hopes and grandest conceptions of Eternal Life, as expressed in song, find realization.

"So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still  
Will lead me on  
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent till  
The night is gone,  
And with the morn those angel faces smile,  
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile."

Source: "Consecration And Purity" by Mary Sparkes Wheeler

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THE END