CHAPTER II

1870-77

OXFORD. RUSKIN. SOHO. CLIFTON COLLEGE MISSION. *A Book of Bristol Sonnets.* ORDINATION.

> I have no name, I want no fame,
> I only trust that the good God
> When I am dead will overhead
> Let daisies blossom from the sod,
> To tell the village ages on
> I strove to be its champion.
>
> *Preface to my book if ever published*, 1872.

THE President of Magdalen—Sir Herbert Warren, Hardwicke's contemporary at Balliol, thus sums up his undergraduate days:

"In October 1870 H. D. R. came to Balliol, whither he followed that brilliant and unworldly disciple of Thring, Lewis Nettleship. Here he enjoyed the guidance of Jowett, T. H. Green, and Henry Smith, and the companionship on the river of Rowland Prothero and the present Master of Balliol A. L. Smith, his life-long friend; at the Union, of Asquith and Milner; in philanthropic dreams, of Arnold Toynbee and the 'diggers,' of whom he was one on Ruskin's road; boating, speaking, running, jumping, spouting hundreds of verses of his own and those of others, he enjoyed, indeed, crowded hours of happy, healthful youth, learning and teaching a thousand lessons."

Hardwicke was singularly fortunate in having as his tutors T. H. Green and R. L. Nettleship, for both of whom he had sincere veneration. He has written of them, "It was a common faith, a common philosophy, a common desire to give up their lives for others, that made Nettleship and Green fast friends—both were simple and sincere, and in such quiet service so memorable, and in integrity of purpose so greatly honoured."

For T. H. Green and his wife Hardwicke had lasting affection. Nettleship was already a friend, and indeed had been a hero to the younger boy since his earliest days at Uppingham. Hardwicke could recall an occasion when there had been a school row which involved the giving up of the offender to satisfy offended justice: "As was Thring's way, the matter of bringing the offender to book rested largely with the elder boys who were pledged by their position as 'Præpostors' and members of the Sixth form, to safeguard the honour and welfare of the school; so the boys assembled in the big school and there was a great silence. Then Nettleship, as head boy, rose and, fearlessly fronting the whole school, asked the lads to remember they were trusted and called on them to be worthy of the trust. He ended his appeal to their sense of honour, 'Uppingham is a little place, and I dare say you fellows think it doesn't much matter how we treat our masters or

one another, but at least it shall never be said, if I can help it, that Uppingham boys are either liars or cowards!' Ever after one seemed to look to Nettleship as a kind of impersonation of truth and bravery."

Writing of his memories of Nettleship in Balliol days, Hardwicke describes "the way in which an undergraduate, with a terrible false concord, or impossible quantity disfiguring his Latin prose or verse, would stutter out some lame apology and hint that he thought Virgil or Cicero had done the like; with what a quietude and dignity of reproach would Nettleship answer, 'Oh, did he? I daresay he did. You see, Virgil wrote a great deal, and Cicero was a tremendous swell; I mean they could do pretty nearly everything they wished with the language. It's worth while, perhaps, just turning up the reference.' And then, very solemnly, the offender was allowed to go and search in the great lexicon for the impossible, and out of his own mouth feel that he was condemned."

Hardwicke spent the first two years at Classics, and took a Third Class in Classical Mods.

Dr. Kidd, 'fleet-foot Kidd,' as his Balliol contemporaries called him, remembers that at the Matriculation examination Hardwicke was questioned on a particular form of Greek construction. "Oh, that's the constructio ad sensum," he asserted. "Not quite that, I think," said the examiner. "Well, then, it's the constructio ad non-sensum," Hardwicke retorted, and he was not rejected.

During his last two years at Oxford he studied

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Natural Science, choosing Chemistry as his special subject with a view to the adoption of medicine as his profession, and he is described by his mother as "dressed in a black pinafore, up to his eyes in chemicals." His mind was always full of the subject on which he was engaged at the moment. If he burnt the toast for his friend's breakfast he would say, "Carbon, my dear fellow, pure carbon, and excellent for you." Everything he did was done with ardour and eagerness, and the friends who can recall memory of him at this time all speak of his boundless high spirits.

In athletics he gained the high jump in the O.U.A.C. Freshmen's Sports in 1870, and is remembered clearing a five-foot fence at the roadside, over which his hat had been blown, with the utmost ease. And on another occasion, when his way in the street was barred by an old lady in a donkey chair, he astonished her not a little by jumping over the whole equipage! In 1871 he won the Balliol College high jump, 5ft. 3 in.—and in 1872 was bracketed third in O.U.A.C. Sports for a jump of 5 ft. 5 in. In 1871-2 he rowed in the Morrison Fours.

Mr. Norman Pearson, in his article "Balliol as I knew it," published in *Blackwood's Magazine*, May 1910, refers to 'Jacko' Rawnsley as "quite a feature of the place—I think he would be a feature in most places! We won the Morrison Fours together, in a crew stroked by A. L. Smith, with Rawnsley, myself and Raleigh behind him in this order. Rawnsley was in a way the troubadour of

the College, composing songs by the yard, and singing them on any occasion which required musical honours." Hardwicke competed for the Newdigate, sending in a poem on "The Paris Commune, 1871," which was said to contain the lines:

> And many a corpse was on the threshold laid
> Which yesterday with happy children played.

But at this period he was credited, often fraudulently, with the authorship of most of the rhymes current in Balliol.

From the first he had a good friend in Jowett, who had just entered upon the Mastership of Balliol, and he owed much to the Master's kindness and sympathy, while he delighted in Jowett's happy witticisms, his pointed and pregnant sayings. Hardwicke realized that in Jowett's presence he was face to face with a great and noble character. "The Master," he writes, "knew generally what was in a man, studied men's characters, observed men closely, and, even on the torture-rack of his long silences, learned something of their inner lives. If his words were sharp they were often salutary."

That Hardwicke spoke from practical experience there is evidence in the following letter wherein, after suggesting books for study, Jowett adds: "I would not advise you to spend time on verses. You know, of course, you have a much greater task in hand than reading for the Schools—which is the improving and strengthening of your own character. You must get rid of all excitable ways which will altogether unfit you for any place of responsibility

or authority. No one will tell you the reason, but you will find somehow that you will not succeed in life. Steady work seems to me most likely to cure this fault, and you must be on your guard against it."

At this time Hardwicke's passion for writing poetry, and especially for sonnet-making, was in danger of becoming too absorbing. In an article which appeared in the *Cornhill*, December 1893, "Memories of the Master of Balliol," he recalls some reminiscences which are probably autobiographical. "I remember the Master saying to a young man who had been talking in rather an exaggerated way of his love for the poets, 'Do you ever write poetry?' 'Yes, well I do something that way,' was the answer. 'Never mind,' said the Master, 'how much you write, burn it all.'

"A secret of Jowett's influence with men was his transparent candour, a candour too transparent to be rude. One remembers how, at the first breakfast with the Master, we who as trembling undergraduates had talked, or thought we talked, of all things under heaven and earth and had been unable to extract replies, heard from the Master's lips his opinion of our chatter, 'Good morning, gentlemen, I think you must cultivate conversational powers—good morning.'"

Jowett had a love of naturalness that at times almost appeared simplicity. On one occasion Hardwicke had forgotten the hour for reading essays to the Master till it was too late to go to his lodgings and change his boating clothes. He came up breathless from the river in flannels, knocked at the

study door and said, "I am very sorry, Master; I clean forgot the time and have run up straight from the boats to read my essay. I know I ought to have come in cap and gown, but I really have not had time to go to my lodgings, but I'll go and change if you like." To the amazement of his correctly attired brother-essayists, Jowett smiled and chirrupped, "Come in, come in, I quite understand."

There was much in Oxford at this time to bring richness and interest into Hardwicke's life. Above all, Ruskin was Slade Professor of Fine Art, and the charm of his teaching, its eloquence, its humane breadth, its appreciation of the needs of others, quickly attracted him. In a lecture given in later years Hardwicke says, "Ruskin got in quite an astonishing manner at the heart of the undergraduate. One looks back to the crowded audiences at his Oxford lectures, to the delightful breakfasts with 'the Master,' at Corpus, to the new experiences, with their fruit for life, of being roadmakers for the Hinksey poor under the direct encouragement and personal supervision of the Slade professor." And again, "It is I know the fashion to sneer at those Hinksey digging days; we who were privileged to be of the number who did what we could to mend a very bad road and to give some comfort to the Hinksey villagers by making their village green more pleasant and more approachable, have no cause to regret the time we stood the chaff of half Oxford who came out to see, and on inquiry it will be found that many of the diggers who have helped their time in social movements, in the improvement of the

H. W. Taunt & Co., Oxford

RUSKIN'S ROAD-MAKERS AT HINKSEY

H. D. R. with spade, Lord Milner with pick-axe

dwellings of the poor, in university settlements in big towns, in home industries for the people, and the like, probably owe all their interest in such matters to the spirit gained from Ruskin the roadmaker in old Hinksey days."

Hardwicke took his degree in Natural Science in December 1874. In his mother's journal is the entry: "Saw Hardwicke's name in the Class List, to our great relief, third class, but in a good year among able men, and his practical chemistry was praised."

It is obvious, indeed, that his years at Oxford were years of distraction which did not favour success in any one subject. His sense of the fulness of life militated against that concentration of purpose which is essential to conspicuous academic successes. His mind, too, was disturbed by misgivings and doubts as to his future career. His perplexities revealed themselves in many poems. He was unable to decide for himself, and yet was impatient of guidance, especially of parental guidance. The chemical side of the medical profession had attraction for him, but his health was uncertain, and he was utterly repelled by the work in the dissecting room. Early in 1874 he volunteered to go out as a layman to Madagascar to do mission work, but this offer was not accepted. Thring, as often, gave him sound advice: "You must learn to feel that this world and this life of ours is really, thoroughly and completely governed by a very present God.... Don't get into the habit of thinking that God cuts out the world with a pair of scissors and that you hold the handle of them,

as so many people do, or act as if they did. 'His judgments are like the great deep.' Your father's letter is a good and wise letter. God's work wants every power we can bring into play, and remember when once we begin the ceaseless conflict of modern working life there is no more storing up of material to work from; empty or full, one has to put out something. Your whole inside may feel like a scraped wall before whitewashing, so bare and empty and hopeless, and yet something must be produced. Well it is then if there is stock and stuff enough of old habit and old fulness to make it possible for the used-up powers to still do good work. Again, a knowledge of medicine is a wonderful gain to a missionary, and so far from the climate being more injurious as you grow older, the more settled time of life is the best for endurance of that as of other things. But this is of small account, what is real is God's will, and it is God's will that you should have some more training first. Follow that will humbly, however it may pain, and be sure you will live to bless it."

Hardwicke took counsel also with several friends, especially with Dr. Lionel Beale. Beale had formerly encouraged him to become a doctor. "No one," he would say with a laugh, "could humbug the old ladies better," but he now recommended him to give up all thoughts of medicine as a profession, and to read for Holy Orders. Hardwicke took his advice.

But this, the most momentous decision of his career, involved far less of change than might be

supposed. For whether as minister to the body or to the soul, his life was destined to be one of service, and the same spirit would have inspired his work in either case. His efforts for the good of his fellows were at no time prompted by what may be called secularism. He drew the strength for them always from a spiritual source, and the decision to avow this openly before the world involved no searchings of heart. When his friends heard of his intention to enter Holy Orders they took it as a matter of course, for they felt it would make no difference in the general trend of his activities. Of these they had already recognized the religious inspiration.

Early in 1875 Hardwicke volunteered to work in Seven Dials, and became lay-chaplain to the Newport Market Refuge, in Crown Street, Soho, under Mr. Stephen Gwynne, Rector of St. Mary's, Soho. Here he came to know James Hinton, the author of the *Mystery of Pain*, and learnt from him something of his enthusiasm for work among the people. A friendship with Miss Octavia Hill, which lasted till her death, was begun through Ruskin, who commended her to Hardwicke as "the best lady abbess you can have for London work."

As usual, Hardwicke's thoughts found expression in verse, and several 'Soho songs' were produced. One of these turned on dancing, which he always defended and encouraged, finding great pleasure in it himself. He had evidently written to Ruskin on the subject and the reply is characteristic: "Thanks for your note. Be sure of this, the arts cannot educate or refine life. Life educates and refines

them. A noble person can be taught to dance beautifully, but no teacher of dancing will educate a base person into beauty or gentleness. It is of no use to begin at the complexion: get the stomach of the country into order, and then your arts will all teach themselves. Any person thoroughly, rationally, and innocently cheerful, dances without being able to help it."

After several months of strenuous work in Seven Dials Hardwicke had a serious breakdown in health. His friend, Marsham Argles wrote to him in consolation: "These attacks one ought in a way to be glad of—for by teaching you to suffer they prepare you for your future work. Newman calls unbroken health in some cases a curse, and I dare say it often is so."

In the summer of 1875 Hardwicke made up his mind to go out to Ceylon as a missionary under Bishop Coplestone, but doubt about his physical fitness made his friends bring strong pressure to bear against this. During his recovery he was once more in the Lake Country, this time at Wray Castle with his cousins, visiting Mr. Thring again at Grasmere, and staying with Mr. and Mrs. John Fletcher at Croft, Ambleside. Here he delighted in the beauty of his surroundings, and in the sympathetic companionship of their daughters, Alice and Edith Fletcher, with whom he had much in common, sharing an admiration for Ruskin and his teaching, and the love of all that was beautiful in literature, music and art, and laying the foundation of a friendship which developed later into the closest intimacy.

In December 1875 Hardwicke was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, in Gloucester Cathedral.

Tennyson made clever use in his poem "The Churchwarden and the Curate" of the following anecdote, written down for him at his request by Hardwicke in 1890: "I was returning from my ordination in 1875 to my father's parish, Halton Holgate, near Spilsby, and found my father's churchwarden, G. R., upon the platform. He saw I had a white tie on and he said cheerily, 'Well, Mr. Rawnsley, I can see by that white thing round your throat that they've gone and made a parson on you. Well, well, God A'mighty knows theer mun bea parsons as well as farmers and you'd be a fool i' the crew yard along o' the beasts, I reckon, and I should mebbe be as big a fool in the pulpit o' Sunday. Now, doant be stunt, I'm your father's churchwarden, and I'm goain to giv' you a bit o' my moind.' I answered him that so far from my being 'stunt' I should take it as a compliment; and he continued, 'There's no daub about you I kna (he meant, I think, no sham). You'll be main and plain and straight I kna, but hooiver tek my advice, doant ye saay nowt to noabody, but creep and crawl and git along under the hedge bottoms for a bit, and they'll make a bishop on ye yet'."

In January 1876 Hardwicke went to take charge of the Clifton College Mission, then just inaugurated by Dr. Percival—the first public school mission, with the exception of that undertaken by Uppingham seven years earlier. He worked under the guidance

of Mr. Fuller, the vicar of St. Barnabas, the scene of his special labours being a district which was just beginning to grow at a surprising rate, where rows of small houses had lately been built, to which the roughest class of the population of Bristol had gravitated. At first there was no building where services could be held; but after a few months, during which he brought all his energy and enthusiasm to bear in making friends among the people, a disused factory workshop was secured and fitted up for St Agnes' Mission services.

Hardwicke describes the scene on a Sunday evening:—"On arriving there was a free fight going on outside the public house or the door of the mission room among 'Mr. Rawnsley's boys,' as they were dubbed. Then, calling upon them to be gentlemen and let the women go upstairs first, there was a pause, and up bundled the women and girls who dared face the meeting. Then to seats reserved in front close by me the 'lambs' came up, and just as prayer began, a fusillade of stones from outside would rattle all along the wooden walls of our conventicle, while the noise of horses in the stable below added to the din. In the midst of prayer the door would be knocked at and the porter often be overpowered by a strong rush, and fighting would go on below stairs till I appeared—passed up one or two, and sent off the others. All would go well till, in the middle of the hymn, perhaps, catcalls and whistles sounded outside, and one of my 'lambs' would nudge his fellow and walk out—courteously remarking, 'Sorry we've got an engagement with a pal, good

night.' Often a man, disguising the fact that he was in liquor, would be in the midst of the mission congregation, and I had to rise from my knees and help to tumble him out, and come back and go on with the prayers as if nothing had happened. It is hard work—very—to fight a man downstairs, and come up and try to be in breath as you go on with sermon or prayer."

With Mr. Frank Barnett, the brother of Canon Barnett, Hardwicke was the chief organiser of the Bristol Tavern and Club Company Ltd., which opened several houses-of-call in Bristol, at which all refreshments excepting intoxicating liquor were sold, and where organized games, debating clubs, musical evenings and every sort of effort which might help social life were fostered. His visiting card had a characteristic footnote appended to his name and address: "Mr. Rawnsley hopes that those in his District who wish to see him will make it convenient to call on him at the Vicarage between 6.30 and 8.15 A.M. and 9.30 and 11 A.M."

Crippled by the want of noble surroundings, Hardwicke worked for two years, "half parson half policeman," as he described himself, and though he had many disappointments and discouragements the work brought him real happiness; for he knew he had got at the heart of the people among whom he lived. Some years after he left Bristol he received a typical letter:—"I expect you will be surprised to get this letter from one of your old boys from the parish of St. Agnes, and I hope you will forgive the liberty I have taken in writing to you I looked

through a directory and found your address I thought I should like to here how you was getting on Sir I have often thought I should like to get a shift to the North and see you Sir, Now I find I am about 40 or 50 miles from your home Sir When I was at home some time ago Mother told me she saw you at St. Agnes when it was opened and she told me the people was glad to see you among them Sir I think they would be glad to have you with them again for good but Sir we ruff lads did not treat you well when you was there but I am glad to tell you I have had my eyes opened since then I thank God I should of liked to of seen your name Sir for the living but I expect you have a more healthy place where you are Best respects."

In her *Life of Canon Barnett* Mrs. Barnett writes of Hardwicke at this time as "an energetic public-spirited, dancing, laughter-loving curate." Though he described himself as happy as the day was long, his work in Bristol was not all smooth sailing. He made there, as everywhere, many devoted friends, but to some less congenial spirits he appeared as a firebrand. His youthful energetic ardour was not always distinguishable from impatience; his unconventionality was occasionally misinterpreted as carelessness, the complexity of his interests appeared as 'desultoriness,' while his habit of thinking matters out for himself and acting on his decisions, shewed a 'disinclination to be taught.' And doubtless a true charge was made that, instead of giving his spare time to reading theology, he was immersed in writing poetry. Old Bristol had made a strong

appeal to him, and his first volume of verse, *A Book of Bristol Sonnets*, published in 1877, reflected his great interest in local history.

In the early years of his life Hardwicke caused not a little anxiety to Thring, Jowett, and others of his older friends by a certain casualness, a restless flitting from one subject or pursuit to another, which they considered likely to interfere with his full possibilities of usefulness. In some outward matters of practical importance he made the necessary reforms on his own initiative; for instance, the answering of letters had been a matter of chance and good luck, but quite early in his official career he made a resolution, always afterwards kept, to deal every day directly after breakfast with the correspondence of the morning. A resolution always to make the responses legible did not, unfortunately, follow as a corollary. The real correction, however, of this tendency to spread himself, so to say, in too loose a fashion, came from the development of what was always part of his nature, though at first inconspicuous. This was a very remarkable level-headedness which kept his judgment sound, and preserved his intellectual balance, even when to the superficial observer he might seem an extremist. He had, indeed, a rare diplomatic tact, and the success of his various campaigns is a testimony of his practical good sense and knowledge of when and how to act, and when to refrain.

The first of these campaigns was directed against the authorities of Bristol who, in 1877, had condemned the Tower of St. Werburgh to be

demolished, on the ground that it obstructed traffic. Hardwicke tried to imbue the citizens and his opponents with the principle that guided his action on this and similar occasions—that such architectural and natural beauty as the country possesses is a heritage held only in trust which "we to our children must transmit or die." He was not successful in preserving the Tower *in situ*, but, largely owing to his efforts and enthusiasm, the Town Council and townspeople were brought to realize that the Tower was a precious possession, not lightly to be done away with; and when eventually it was demolished in Corn Street it was re-erected stone by stone, and still stands as the Tower of St. Werburgh's Church, in Mina Road, Montpelier, not two miles from its original position.

When, after two years' work, he left Bristol at the end of 1877, it was proved that during this time of strenuous labour he had made his mark; for he received testimonials not only from the people in the mission district among whom he had worked, but also a document signed by the Mayor and leading citizens of Bristol stating that "although unconnected with your parish, we have both felt and proved the worth of your friendship, and the value and thoroughness of your work, not alone amongst your own poor but wherever you have seen that vice might be lessened, and the lives of your fellow men lifted from low and sordid things. . . . Your friends know well that in losing you they lose one whose aim has always been to promote the highest and best interests of his parishioners and

fellow citizens. The thought of others' needs has always been foremost in your mind."

On leaving Bristol Hardwicke accepted the offer, made by his cousin, of the living of Wray on Windermere, and was ordained priest in Carlisle Cathedral on December 23rd, 1877.