

John Dunlop

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**Dr. Laseron**

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DR. LASERON.

(*With Portrait, etc.*)

Michael Maximilian Augustus Henry Laseron was born on the 11th of May, 1819, in Königsberg, where his father was a Rabbi, and where our venerable and devoted Missionary, the Rev B. F. Jacobi, has laboured so long and so successfully.

AN ORPHAN AND A FUGITIVE.

At the age of seven Michael lost both his parents in one day by cholera, and was taken to the home of an uncle, who proved very unkind to him. In the good providence of God, he was early led out of the darkness of Judaism into the light of the Gospel. Having spoken of Jesus and his desire for Christian baptism, his relatives so persecuted him that he fled for his life. Being penniless, he was obliged to sleep in the open air and beg food to stay the cravings of hunger as he trudged wearily along on foot to Frankfort-on-the-Maine.

His relatives sent the police to search for him and bring him back. One night he was discovered by a police officer sleeping in a corn field, to whom he told the story of his cruel treatment, which so touched the heart of the officer that he permitted him to pursue his journey unmolested. At last the Jewish runaway orphan lad reached Frankfort, where he found Christian friends who showed him much kindness, and where Pastor Keimers administered to him the ordinance of Christian baptism. From Frankfort he proceeded to Schaffhausen, and while walking along the road he tried to earn a living by selling writing materials. When he arrived at Basle he was seized with a serious illness; but God provided for him a nurse in Miss Haslen, a good Missionary lady, under whose kind and skilful treatment he soon got well again. Then he crossed to England, and landed in Palestine Place, where his temporal needs were met, and where he received some instruction in the Hebrew language in connection with the London Society.

A MISSIONARY STUDENT IN THE SOCIETY'S COLLEGE.

Mr. Laseron, on the recommendation of the Rev. Dr. McCaul, Rev. R. H. Herschell, the Rev. B. Davidson, and others, applied for admission into the British Society's Jewish Mission College, and having given satisfactory answers to the questions placed in his hands, he was accepted as a student on the 2nd of March, 1847.

The College, No. 116, Upper Stamford Street, Blackfriars Road, was opened by a devotional service held in the Lecture Room on Friday morning, the 16th of April, 1847. There were present several of the founders and friends of the Society, among whom were the Treasurer and Secretary, the Rev. R. H. Herschell, the Rev. B. Davidson, the Principal and Resident Tutor, and Messrs. Brunner, Laseron, Schoneberg and Lowitz, the first four students. They were all with one accord in that one place to implore the Divine blessing on this branch of the Society's undertaking, and to seek for the tutors and students the influences of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures were read, the students were addressed, a sermon was preached, and the Rev. R. H. Herschell closed the solemn and interesting service by earnest prayer.

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## A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH.

Soon after Messrs. Laseron, Brunner and Lowitz were admitted as members of the church assembling in Surrey Chapel, the scene of the ministry of the Rev. James Sherman, one of the earliest friends of the Society.

At a meeting of the Committee, held on Tuesday, May 4th, 1847, Principal Davidson's report was presented by Mr. Yonge, from which we give the following interesting item: –

“I think it my privilege to record the admission of three of our students, Messrs. Laseron, Brunner, and Lowitz to church membership in Surrey Chapel last Monday week, after a very affectionate and touching address of the minister of that place to an audience of over 2,000 people, exhorting them to seek the spiritual welfare of Israel, and entreating them, as a church, to uphold the hands of your Society in every way possible. The students in their turn addressed the assembly, which manifestly excited very great interest.”

## LEAVING THE COLLEGE.

When Mr. Laseron intimated his intention of leaving the College to study medicine, in the hope of thereby promoting the spiritual welfare of his brethren, several of the members of the Committee were dissatisfied, as there had been a clear understanding that the advantages of the College were extended to the students on the prospect of their ultimately becoming the Society's missionaries to the Jews.

This led Mr. Laseron to forward to the Committee the following letter, which deserves a place here, as there is enshrined in it the secret of a holy, happy, and helpful Christian life: –

“39, King's Square, Goswell Road,  
“September 17th, 1849.

“Gentlemen, – I am very sorry that my leaving the College appears to have made an unfavourable impression on the Committee, by whom, I fear, I am considered ungrateful. Such a reflection would, indeed, be painful to me after the great kindness I have received ever since my connection with the Society. I wish, therefore, to say, that if I have erred in coming to this decision too hastily, and without first consulting the Committee, I regret it. My path seemed so clearly marked out that I thought I could not mistake what was the will of God. I write now to assure you that I will endeavour to show my gratitude by at once offering my services to the Society, without remuneration, as their Missionary for the next two years, by working daily three hours amongst my Jewish brethren. And, as no missionary can enter Austria, I will give up the idea of pursuing my studies in Vienna, and go to Leipsic, where I can have free access to the Jews.

“I hope to have your reply, sanctioning this plan, and I trust I shall have the happiness of knowing that the Committee approve of the course I have taken, and will always regard me as their grateful and faithful servant,

“AUG. H. LASERON.”

In reply to that letter, Mr. Yonge, at the request of the Committee, whilst expressing regret at Mr. Laseron's retirement from the College, bore testimony to the excellency of his Christian character and conduct, and commended him to God and the Word of His grace, thus: –

“That the Committee are thankful that the previous conduct of Mr. Laseron, as a student, had been such as to entitle him to the unqualified commendation of the tutors; and that, believing him to have at heart the highest interests of his brethren, they entreat for

him the guidance and blessing of God, and will be glad to maintain a correspondence with him.”

Thus, at the Society's College, Mr. Laseron made his mark as a student, and received spiritual impulses that will last for ever. He went forth from the College equipped for preaching the Gospel to Jew and Gentile. He went forth to pursue medicine in order that he might be all the better qualified for the work of winning souls to Christ. He went to Erlangen, where he remained two years, and in his leisure hours studied Homœopathy. When he returned to London he began to practise as a medical man in King's Square, Goswell Road, with a large measure of success. From London he went to Leipsic, where he took the degree of M.D., and then returned to his practice in King's Square. From King's Square he removed to Northampton Square, where “all went merry as a marriage bell,” for there he was happily united in the bonds of matrimony to Clara, the widow of Pastor Rolle, *nee* Von Poschwitz. In 1854, when they removed to Edmonton, the pillar of cloud and fire went before them, and then rested over their tabernacle, as a guiding, guarding, and gladdening light.

From a narrative of the origin and progress of the Girls' Industrial Orphan Home, and the Evangelical Protestant Deaconesses' Institution and Training Hospital, Tottenham, prepared by Dr. Laseron, and bearing the date of 1873, we feel constrained to give two or three illustrations of how wonderfully the Lord led them, in answer to believing, fervent, persevering prayer.

#### THE LOSS OF A CHILD LEADING TO THE OPENING OF A SCHOOL, ETC., ETC.

If the reader had been passing through the village of Edmonton on a summer's day in 1855, he might have seen the blinds drawn down throughout the house of Dr. Laseron, indicating that sorrow and death had found their way into its precincts. There, in one of the rooms, lay the lovely frame of the lifeless darling which God had lent those sorrowing parents for the brief period of 14 months. After the funeral had taken place, the dwelling which had been lighted up by the bright eyes and the smiling face of their little one, seemed empty and desolate.

As the tender mother, fresh from the chamber of affliction, walked with a weeping heart through the streets of Edmonton she was saddened by seeing so many poor children almost in a state of nudity; they engaged her sympathy and pity. She went home and told her husband she would like to open a small school, in order to gather in these little urchins of the gutter; whereupon they both agreed that if God would give them a direct sign with regard to help, then this undertaking should be set on foot. They, therefore, made this matter the subject of earnest, importunate prayer. Out of that loss came not only a Ragged School, but an Orphan Home, and the Deaconesses' Institution and Hospital, Tottenham.

#### MODERN MIRACLES. INSTANCES OF DIRECT ANSWERS TO PRAYER.

It might not be out of place to mention a few of the numerous instances of direct answers to prayer for the encouragement of some of God's tried and troubled children. At a certain period, when meat was very expensive and the outgoings were very large, the question was raised whether it would not be advisable to alter the meat diet from daily to four times a week; and it was decided that a week of private prayer should be set apart in order to ascertain the mind of God. Towards the latter end of that week, on a Friday, at 11 o'clock at night, a single knock came to the door of Dr. L.'s house. He being at the time still actively engaged in the labours of the medical profession, thought that a poor patient

was seeking his assistance. Having already retired for the night, he got up and went to the door, making inquiry before opening it, "Who is there?" The reply was given by a man saying, "A porter from the railway." On opening the door, a large sack fell inside the house, to the alarm of Dr. L., who asked the porter, "What is this?" He replied, "I think it is meat." To which Dr. L. responded, "What? I am not a butcher!" "Whether you be a butcher or not, sir, I don't know," replied the man, "but if your name is Dr. Laseron this is for you." In vain Dr. L. tried to find out where the gift came from. The porter thought it came from Norfolk; but no further clue could be obtained. Thus the difficulty as regards the orphans' supply of meat for that week was at once overcome.

When the next week had nearly drawn to a close, on the Friday night at the same hour the same circumstance occurred again; but still there was no clue to the sender. The second week was thus bridged over, and we felt encouraged to go on with earnest prayer.

The third week had again almost come to a termination, and for the third time the same thing occurred at the same day and hour. Dr. L. was still without any clue as to the donor, when on the following Saturday a letter was received to the following purport: –

"I am desired by my mother to inform you that she read your report, and, being sheep farmers, she thought that as meat is very dear, she would kill a sheep each week for the benefit of the Institution until the price of meat should be somewhat reduced. And therefore she says that as the price of meat will be cheaper in the ensuing week, she will discontinue to send it."

The letter concluded with the writer's name and address.

In the same year, during the month of August, the funds of the Institution became very low. The amount of money in the treasury was reduced to only one half-penny, when a letter arrived one Monday morning from a noble friend who was travelling with his family in Wales, and enjoying there the beauties of nature. Learning from his daughter the smallness of our funds, he wrote and said that, as a proof of his gratitude to God for His kindness to him and his family, he felt it the greatest privilege to help one of God's servants who was sur- {340} rounded by so many orphans, and enclosed a cheque for £100.

Yea, dear reader, be of good cheer. The hand which you cannot see is full of blessings, and it needs only our willingness to receive them whenever they are bestowed.

The writer might go on and narrate a whole volume of such instances – nay, he would call them miracles, for such they are, as much as the miracles of old at the time when our blessed Lord fed the four thousand with seven loaves and a few little fishes.

#### HIS LAST DAYS.

On April 10th, 1894, Dr. Laseron returned from Nordhausen, where, during his brief stay of six months, he had been very helpful to many Christians, and been the means of leading sinners to the Saviour. He had come home that he might, just for a little while longer here, bear witness to the Lord's unspeakable love before ascending to be with Him for ever.

In his childhood he had been trained to regard the Lord Jesus as an impostor, but his eyes were early opened to see Him as his Saviour and Friend. From the time he entered the Society's College, he grew in the knowledge of Christ. Christ became to him "the altogether lovely, all his salvation, and all his desire;" and only a few hours before he departed to be with Him, he said to a dear Christian friend by his bedside, in accents soft and sweet: "I am going to gaze upon the beauty of the King throughout eternity." In this way, on April 28th, 1894, in the 75th year of his age, his blessed Christlike career came peacefully and gradually to a triumphant ending in "A gentle wafting to immortal life."

## THE FUNERAL SERVICE.

It was our great privilege to be present at his funeral on Friday, the 4th of May, in Clapton Hall and Abney Park Cemetery. We were delighted with the way in which Mr. McVicker, in the Hall, and Mr. Russell Hurditch, at the grave, improved the occasion for the salvation and sanctification of souls. The same glorious Gospel which our departed brother had been taught in the Society's College, and which he had preached for many years, both at home and abroad, with such signal success, was preached with the power of the Holy Spirit at his funeral by those two honoured servants of the Lord. It is our conviction that, as the result of the funeral service, many believers were strengthened and jewels won for the Redeemer's crown.

## DR. LASERON'S MONUMENT.

Dr. Laseron, who delighted to call himself a spiritual son of the British Society, has left a monument more enduring than brass or marble in the Deaconesses' Institution and Hospital, Tottenham, with its branches in England, Ireland, and the Holy Land – an Institution which deserves a hundred-fold more sympathy and support than it has yet received, the priceless permanent results of which up to date, and in their totality, are known to God alone.

During the 25 years of the Institution's existence, the Sisters, with the supreme aim of glorifying Christ in the salvation of souls, had nursed: –

Parent House	...	...	11,752
Out-Patients ...	...	...	82,301
Dental Patients	...	...	4,097
Out-Stations	...	...	42,660
			140,810

We most heartily commend this grand Institution to the prayerful and practical sympathy of all our readers. It is supported entirely by voluntary contributions, and funds are urgently needed to enable the Council to keep clear of debt and extend the work.

Truly the Gospel seed sown in the Society's College many years ago had fallen into good ground and had yielded glorious fruit, some a hundred fold, and some a thousand.

Dr. Laseron went forth from the College with his soul and face radiant with the glory of Christ, the "Sun of Righteousness, who hath risen with healing under His wings;" and ever since that light had been shining, brighter and brighter, as a saving and sanctifying power. Dr. Laseron had been the means of communicating not only physical but spiritual health to multitudes of men and women and children.

The supreme lesson of the lives of the sainted founder, the devoted lady superintendent, and their loving helpers, has been well given by our great poet, thus: –

There is a kind of character in thy life  
That to the observer doth thy history  
Fully unfold; thyself and thy belongings  
Are not thine own so proper as to waste  
Thyself upon thy virtues, them on thee.  
Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,  
Not light them for themselves: for if our virtues  
Did not go forth of us 'twere all alike  
As though we had them not. Spirits are not finely touched,  
But to fine issues.