

JOSEPH WARD

Desert Poet. Prospector. And a Manxman.
His Life and Adventures.

1879-1928.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

The manuscript of the life and adventures of Joseph Ward, together with his poems and songs, which has been placed in our hands by his brother, who will be well remembered as a grocer in Drumgold Street, Douglas, will, we are sure, prove of great interest to our readers. We intend publishing the manuscript as it has been written, in weekly instalments.

Joseph Ward is now turned 69 years of age, and was born in September, 1859, at Sulby Village, Lezayre. He was educated at Dr. McBurney's School, Douglas. He served his time as a baker in Douglas with a man named Moore, known as 'Mouldy Joe.' His father had a farm in the parish of Maughold, which became vacant, and he asked Joseph if he would care to try his luck in it, and he agreed. His father stocked it a cost of £500, but Joseph only occupied it for a few months.

In 1878 he was seized with the wander lust, and left the Isle of Man for good, and estimates his wanderings to amount to 60,000 miles, with horses, mules, burros, and afoot in Western areas, and between 1878 and 1890 over 240,000 miles of train beating.

He claims to know the Sierras and Desert Ranges, particularly Nevada and Mojave Desert, better than any living man.

Injo and Mona Sectuns he regards as his home counties, together with the High Sierras, North Nevada Ranges, and the San Bernardino Deserts.

He has four mining claims, two in the Coro Mountains, and one each in Mono County and San Bernardino County. In 1901, together with his partner, Louis Leidy, of Bishop, they made a location south-east of Goldfield Red Top Outcrop, Tonopah, and together with Jim Butler and his wife (the discoverers of the goldfield) owned the only two tents in the place. Ignorant of the fact that there was a cap covering the ore, they sold their claims for 500 dollars each. These two claims have since produced 50,000,000 dollars, and are now the centre of the celebrated Mizpah Lode system. They often joke over what they missed and could and should have had, and wonder had they got the millions that were in the hollow of their hands, if they would have landed in Paris, taken to drink, and its subsequent results, and died. As it is they have enjoyed the pure air of heaven. Poverty kept them healthy and in tip-top health.

It is his boast that he has not slept in a house for over twenty-three consecutive years. He cannot live a city life; the freedom of the desert is the breath of life to him, and he states, that he has no home, is a homeless wanderer, without a home on earth, could never decide on a place to live in, and finds it equally difficult to select a place to die. A strange man, a strange life, and one that has been crowded with exciting incidents.

This introduction to the life of Joseph Ward gives but a slight idea of what follows in his manuscript, the first chapters of which will appear next week.

MOTHER.
(By JOSEPH WARD).

The tears, dimmed her eyes when we parted;
The tears filled her eyes that day;
That day long ago when I started
For that land so far away.

In the morning of life's happy hours,
With the friends we used to play
As sweetly we gathered the flowers,
In childhood's happy day.

By the dim firelight I can see her
Sitting lonely there waiting for me;
I will come. I will come far to cheer;
I am coming home to-day.

In the pride of my youth I did wander,
As the years, rolled idly by.
On memory's vistas ponder,
To that home I fain would fly.

Often while down by the river
In Sierra's glorified day,
I'd think of that one who was ever
Waiting, waiting for me.

Oh, the years that are passed and are ended,
With their visions false and true;
With the glory of life they are blended.
Yes, I am coming home to you.

Her hopes, they are chilled with the wailing,
Often she sank in despair,
Lost the child of her youth belating,
Her staff would fail her there.

How changed is the face since I saw her,
As I left her there that day.
She pined thro- the years like a flower
That's fading fast away.

Tho' feeble as the shadows of the evening,
Her heart is still beating for me.
Oh, mother love, that sacred thing,
Oh, reverence that memory.

These dear ones have gone to the Shadow Land
Beyond that sun down sea,
Where youth's eternal magic wand
Will give them back to me.

I am coming far to see her,
Never more to roam:
I will come, I will come, yes, I'm coming,
Yes, I'm coming, coming home.

"OLIVET TO CALVARY."

On Monday last, St. George's mixed choir journeyed to Lezayre Parish Church where they gave a delightful rendering of J. H. Maunder's Cantata, "Olivet to Calvary."

Notwithstanding the wretched weather conditions, the church was well filled, those who did brave the elements, being more than rewarded by the excellent service.

The recits were sung by Miss Lilian Dawson (soprano), Mr. W. Wilcocks (tenor), and Mr. J. Bell (baritone), all their performances being beyond reproach.

Mr. G. J. Burtonwood, hon. organist of St. George's Church, presided at the organ, his interpretation of the "March to Calvary" being especially worthy of mention.

The Rev. Canon Kermode (late of St. George's) was in charge of the proceedings.

Another performance of "Olivet to Calvary" will be given this coming Friday in St. George's Church, commencing at 7-30 p.m.

St. George's Choir gave another performance of this work in their own church on Good Friday, during the evening service. The church was well filled and the soloist, acquitted themselves really excellently.

Miss Lilian Dawson's rendition of the recit., "Droop, Sacred Head," and Mr. Wilcock's solo work in "He was Despised and Rejected," were especially worthy of mention.

Mr. J. Bell's performance was, as usual, splendid.

There is a great deal of work entailed in the preparing of a choir for such a difficult work as this, and the two splendid performances by St. George's Choir reflect great credit on their hon. organist, Mr. G. J. Burtonwood, who devotes so much time to this difficult work.