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# God Is Impartial: Frankenstein and MacDonald

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# INKLINGS FOREVER, Volume VII

A Collection of Essays Presented at the Seventh

FRANCES WHITE COLLOQUIUM on C.S. LEWIS & FRIENDS

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## God is Impartial: *Frankenstein* and MacDonald

**Miho Yamaguchi**

In George MacDonald's *David Elginbrod*, a criminal named Funkelstein exercises his influence on a young woman and makes her an accessory to his crime. I thought that the name sounded somewhat similar to "Frankenstein," so I examined Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* to see if there was any connection. Consequently, I discovered that some episodes and arguments in the story were taken up by MacDonald and reflected in *David Elginbrod* and also in his Wingfold trilogy. It appears that MacDonald, having read *Frankenstein*, tried to answer the cries of despair uttered by Frankenstein's monster--the cries that seem to be shared by many people. Among quite a few connections that I find between *Frankenstein* and MacDonald's stories, this essay will focus on the issues concerning the Creator's impartiality. In the arguments, I will also refer to an anecdote about John Wesley, which may have influenced MacDonald's writing of the Wingfold trilogy.

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## GOD IS IMPARTIAL: *FRANKENSTEIN* AND MACDONALD

Miho Yamaguchi

Does God favor some people and treat His creatures partially? When circumstances make people desperate, do they have no choice but to be bitter and angry? I find that such issues are raised in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and also that MacDonald gives answers to these questions through his novels as he sends light and hope with the truer image of God and His Love.

In a previous essay, I examined MacDonald's *David Elginbrod* in connection with Coleridge and the Joan Drake Case to illuminate his theological ideas (see *Inklings Forever*, VI). In *David Elginbrod*, a criminal named Funkelstein exercises his influence on a young woman, Euphrasia, and makes her an accessory to his crime. I thought that "Funkelstein" sounded similar to "Frankenstein," so I examined Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) to see if there was any connection. Consequently, I discovered that some episodes and arguments in *Frankenstein* are taken up by MacDonald and reflected in *David Elginbrod* (1863), and his Wingfold trilogy: *Thomas Wingfold, Curate* (1876); *Paul Faber, Surgeon* (1879); and *There and Back* (1891). In addition, I found a reference to "Frankenstein" in a remark of Leopold in *Thomas Wingfold, Curate*. Leopold, who had killed his lover in a rage, says, "I am like the horrible creature Frankenstein made—one that has no right to existence—and at the same time like the maker of it, who is accountable for that existence" (*Thomas Wingfold, Curate*, hereafter *TW*, 310) (This passage will be discussed later in the following). It appears that MacDonald had read *Frankenstein*, and tried to answer, in his novels, the cries of despair uttered by Frankenstein and his monster.

I found that quite a few episodes and arguments are taken up by MacDonald from *Frankenstein*. Among them, this essay focuses on the issues which concern the Creator's impartiality and people's spiritual growth. In the arguments, I also refer to an anecdote concerning John Wesley and a porter, which might have influenced MacDonald's writing of the Wingfold trilogy.

### **Madame Moritz's Case in *Frankenstein***

Frankenstein, a young student of science, invents a way to create a life, and starts making a man. However, he gets disgusted by the ugliness of his creation and calls it a "monster," and when the work is finally finished, he disserts it. To his relief, he soon finds that the monster has gone away, but nevertheless, he comes down with a nervous fever and lies in bed for months. When he has almost recovered, he receives a letter from his cousin Elizabeth, who lives with the Frankenstein's family. In her letter, after showing her deep concern for Frankenstein's health, she relates a story about Justine Moritz.

The story goes as follows. Justine was a favorite child of her father, but "through a strange perversity, her mother could not endure her" (*Frankenstein*,

hereafter *Fr*; 40), and the mother treated her very badly after the death of the father. Seeing this, Frankenstein's mother persuaded Justine's mother, Madame Moritz, to let her take in the girl. After that, Justine's brothers and sister died one by one, and Madame Moritz was left alone. Then "the conscience of the woman was troubled; she began to think that the deaths of her favourites was a judgment from heaven to chastise her partiality" (*Fr* 40). Then the "repentant mother" called back Justine to her home (*Fr* 41). However, the mother was "very vacillating in her repentance" (*Fr* 41). She "sometimes begged Justine to forgive her unkindness, but much oftener accused her of having caused the deaths of her brothers and sister" (*Fr* 41). "Perpetual fretting at length threw Madame Moritz into a decline" and finally she died (*Fr* 41). Consequently, Justine came back to the home of Frankenstein and Elizabeth.

I find that the above episode resembles Mrs. Wylder's case in *There and Back*.

### **Mrs. Wylder's Case in *There and Back***

Mrs. Wylder is married to a man whom she could not respect, and she hates him. She has twin boys and a daughter; her husband favors one of the twins, and it makes Mrs. Wylder hate the boy and love the other twin. However, her favorite one dies, and "Her passion over the death of her son; her constant and prolonged contention with her husband; her protest against him whom she called the Almighty" made her fall ill (*There and Back*, hereafter *TB*, 245). Then her daughter Barbara, through whom God's love shines, takes good care of her, and she begins to recover physically and also spiritually. Just like Madame Moritz, Mrs. Wylder's mental conditions fluctuate through the healing process; her repentance "will be resisted by old habit, resuming its force in the return of physical and psychical health" like "the tug of war" (*TB* 247).

Shelley's insertion of the above Moritz' episode into Elizabeth's letter seems somewhat abrupt. For what purpose did she add the anecdote? Could she have been implying with it that, if there be a God, He is partial to his creations? As for MacDonald, he appears to connect the issue concerning parent's partiality with the argument about God's dealings with humans for the purpose of shedding light on God's impartiality. The evidence for MacDonald's making this connection is found in another episode concerning parent's partiality, that of the old minister Walter Drake in *Paul Faber, Surgeon*.

### **Walter Drake's Case in *Paul Faber, Surgeon***

Drake lives with his daughter Dorothy. He had a wife and two sons; the boys were healthy and beautiful, but they died of scarlet fever, while his daughter Dorothy, a "poor, sickly girl," "wailed on" (*Paul Faber Surgeon*, hereafter *PF*, 50). Then his wife pined after the sons and also died. Though Drake felt that Dorothy "had always been a better child than either of her brothers," he loved the boys "more than others admired them, and her the less that others pitied her" (*PF* 50). The narrator goes on:

[H]e did try to love her, for there was a large element of justice in his nature. This, but for his being so much occupied with making himself acceptable to his congregation, would have given him a leadership in the rising rebellion against a theology which crushed the hearts of men by attributing injustice to their God. (*PF* 50-51)

In the above passage, MacDonald suggests that Drake's sense of justice and his making effort to be fair to his daughter would have made him realize that God cannot be partial. Anyone who means to act in accordance to what light he has in his heart would find truer image of God. Also, MacDonald appears to believe that God's justice does not contradict human notion of justice (though of course, His is infinitely bigger than men's, and men's judgment is often selfish<sup>1</sup>). The idea is echoed in a passage in *David Elginbrod*, where David reads this epitaph:

“ ‘Here lie I, Martin Elginbrodde:  
Hae mercy o' my soul, Lord God;  
As I wad do, were I Lord God,  
And ye were Martin Elginbrodde.’ ” (*David Elginbrod* 72)

Concerning this issue, my friend Ms. Kimiko Hashiguchi<sup>2</sup> showed me her deep insight by saying that the above passage sheds light on the Lord's Prayer: “forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us” (Luke 11:4). Hashiguchi went on to say: “We are made in His image, so it is a natural thing for us to be loving and forgiving.” Hearing this, I came to think that the spirit of the prayer could be: I shall forgive; I want to forgive. It is Lord, You in me and I in You that are wanting to love and forgive. Oh, how infinite Your love is! Please love and forgive us as we, the image of you, would.<sup>3</sup>

### **Frankenstein's Monster's Feelings toward His Creator**

In *Frankenstein*, the monster says that his creator is unfair in making him ugly and then deserting him. The monster feels that he is treated even worse than the fallen angel, for he was driven “from joy for no misdeed” (*Fr* 66). Persecuted by humans because of his monstrous figure, he eventually becomes angry and desperate, and he finally starts murdering people. After committing murder, the monster says that there was no other way and it was not his fault. He proclaims that he was firstly “benevolent and good,” but “misery made [him] a fiend” (*Fr* 66). The monster also insists that it is the creator's duty to make his creature happy, and that only when the creator has done his duty, can the creature fulfill his duty towards others. Then the monster “declare[s] war against” humankind, and, more than all, against the creator who had formed him and sent him “forth to this insupportable misery” (*Fr* 92). Vengeance becomes his objective of living.

Shelley may be implying that God disfavors some people and denies them blessings, and that as for those who are discarded, they have no choice but to

degrade themselves in evil thoughts and deeds.

### **Polwarth and the Monster**

In the Wingfold trilogy, there is a character whom people call “monster.”<sup>4</sup> It is Polwarth—Wingfold’s mentor. He has a dwarf like figure and suffers from asthma. His case resembles Frankenstein’s monster’s case in some respects.

Polwarth tells Wingfold how God guided him through his life. When a child, his father sent him away to a public school because he was “an eye sore,” and he felt that he was an outcast. However, he says:

I had no haunting and irritating sense of wrong [ . . . ]—no burning indignation, or fierce impulse to retaliate on those who injured me, or on the society that scorned me. [ . . . ] I sought even with agony the aid to which my wretchedness seemed to have a right. My longing was mainly for a refuge, [ . . . ] where I should be concealed and so at rest. (*TW*83)

Just like Frankenstein’s monster, Polwarth thought that he had a right to aid, but he did not become bitter and revengeful as the monster did.

Polwarth goes on to tell Wingfold that he knew he had a friend. It was God, and he “learned to pray the sooner for the loneliness, and the heartier from the solitude” (*TW*83). However, he says he yet knew “little of the heart” of God (*TW*84). Then, one day, he came to realize that many things that he despised in others “were yet a part of” himself. He found himself “envious and revengeful and conceited” (*TW*84-85). He explains: “Once I caught myself scorning a young fellow to whose disadvantage I knew nothing, except that God had made him handsome enough for a woman” (*TW*85). He saw what a wretch he was, and he imagined that God despised him and was angry with him. To Polwarth, his outward deformity was no more a thing to worry about. His real problem, he found, was the evil in his own soul.

### **Another Connection between Polwarth and the Monster**

In *Thomas Wingfold*, there is an anecdote in which a little boy misunderstands Polwarth’s good intentions. This episode appears to reflect two scenes from *Frankenstein*. Firstly, I will show the *Frankenstein* episodes.

Walking in the woods, the monster sees a girl fall into a river, so he helps her. However, her boyfriend thinks that he was assaulting her, and he shoots at the monster. This incident makes the monster more indignant and revengeful (*Fr*95-96).

In the other episode, the monster, on his way to find his creator, sees a little boy; hoping that such a little boy may not conceive prejudice against his deformity, he seizes on him. Though the monster tells the boy that he does not mean to hurt him, the boy struggles violently and swears at him: “[U]gly wretch! [ . . . ] . Hideous monster! let me go; My papa is a syndic—he is M. Frankenstein—he would punish you!” (*Fr*96-97). Seeing that the boy belongs to the Frankenstein

family, “towards whom [he] have sworn eternal revenge,” and also feeling desperate at hearing the insulting “epithets,” the monster kills the boy (*Fr* 97).

The corresponding Polwarth episode is as follows. One day a little boy mocked him, and for a moment, Polwarth flew into a rage, and he caught the boy. However, Polwarth forgave the boy as soon as he saw his terrified look, and he tried to comfort him. Though Polwarth was talking to him kindly, the boy was “so PRE-possessed, that every tone of kindness [Polwarth] uttered, sounded to him a threat,” and the boy fled headlong into the pond” to escape (*TW* 85-86).

After the incident, Polwarth tried to “govern [his] temper” and “outwardly,” he succeeded (*TW* 86). However, he felt: “I was not that which it was well to be; I was not at peace; I lacked; I was distorted; I was sick” (*TW* 86). One evening, he was, in his heart, “eagerly” and “painfully” trying to persuade the boy “that [he] would not hurt him, but meant well and friendlily towards him,” but then again he had to “let him go in despair” (*TW* 86). Just then, with the sweetest waft of air, something visited him: “just went *being*, hardly moving, over my forehead. Its greeting was more delicate than even my mother’s kiss” (*Fr* 86). Then a thought dawned upon him: “What if I misunderstood God the same way the boy had misunderstood me!” (*TW* 86). Consequently, he read the Bible with a fresh eye, and he was struck with the Words that Jesus “shall save His people from their sins” (*TW* 87). Polwarth says, “I did not for a moment imagine that to be saved from my sins meant to be saved from the punishment of them. That would have been no glad tidings to me” (*TW* 87).

Both Polwarth and Frankenstein’s monster suffer from people’s misunderstanding about their good intentions, but the consequences are contrasting. While the monster grew bitterer and more revengeful, Polwarth becomes more aware of the sickness of his own heart. In the agony that comes both from his solitude and from his deep sense of sin, Polwarth meets God, and then he comes to know that God is saving him from his sins and helping him to become what God means him to be.

### **Juliet Meredith’s Case**

In contrast to Polwarth, a character with outward beauty is also depicted in the Wingfold trilogy. It is Juliet Meredith in *Paul Faber, Surgeon*. This beautiful woman has a secret in her past, and after moving to a village, she shuns people. Paul Faber takes good care of her when she falls ill, and eventually falls in love with her, and finally they get married. However, when she confesses to him about her past, he gets furiously angry and would not forgive her. Juliet, in utter despair, tries to commit suicide, but she was saved by her neighbor, Dorothy.

In conversation with Dorothy, Juliet says, “I never could get rid of the secret that was gnawing at my life. Even when I was hardly aware of it, it was there. Oh, if I had only been ugly, then Paul would never have thought of me!” (*PF* 260-61). Though she deserves sympathy in many ways, her putting blame on her beauty may sound irrational and ridiculous to the readers. By this episode, MacDonald may be hinting that though people easily attribute misery to one’s condition or background, it is no less irrational than to attribute misery to one’s beauty like Juliet does.

### **Leopold’s Case**

Frankenstein's monster puts all the blame on the circumstance he was in, and he insists that being made ugly and being denied happiness drove him to despair and to murder, and that it is injustice that only he was considered criminal when "all human kind sinned against" him (*Fr* 155). On the other hand, in *Thomas Wingfold*, Leopold does not accuse anyone but himself. His above mentioned narrative that he is not only like the monster but like the maker of it suggests that he acknowledges himself to be responsible for what he did and what he was. He thinks that it is nobody but he that made a monster out of himself. He tells Wingfold that hearing excuses made for him only makes him "feel the more horrid" (*TW* 281). Wingfold thinks that the murdered girl is much to be blamed and that Leopold deserves sympathy; however, in his conversation with Leopold, Wingfold never makes excuses for him. Wingfold says: "If I were to find my company made you think with less hatred of your crime, I should go away that instant" (*TW* 281). Concerning excuses, MacDonald shows his insight in *Paul Faber*:

We do our brother, our sister, grievous wrong, every time that, in our selfish justice, we forget the excuse that mitigates the blame. That God never does, for it would be to disregard the truth. As He will never admit a false excuse, so will He never neglect a true one. (*PF* 266)

### **A Shelter: the Monster's Case and Polwarth's Case**

Both Polwarth and Frankenstein's monster seek for a refuge amid persecution. Polwarth's shelter episode appears to reflect the monster's episode, but at the same time, these two make a strong contrast with each other.

In *Frankenstein*, the monster finds refuge in a hovel, which is adjacent to a cottage where a poor family lives. Through a chink, the monster observes the family who support each other with love, and he comes to sympathize with them. Yearning to make friends with them, he finally shows himself, but the family is horrified and they drive him away violently. Despairing of hope, the monster becomes bitterly angry and revengeful.

Polwarth also finds shelter, but differing from the monster's case, the shelter is God's hand. Polwarth says, "I used to fancy to myself that I lay in his hand and peeped through his fingers at my foes. That was at night, for my deformity brought me one blessed comfort—that I had no bedfellow"; "This I felt at first as both a sad deprivation and a painful rejection" (*TW* 83). However, as partly mentioned earlier, he learned to pray the sooner and the heartier "from the solitude which was as a chamber with closed door" (*TW* 83).

### **Demand for Happiness as a Condition**

Just as the monster makes it a condition that his creator should make him happy first, so Drake makes a condition in his prayer to God. Drake suffers from poverty, and is ashamed of not being able to pay back his debt to a butcher, and he feels resentments and doubts "not of the existence of God, nor of His goodness towards men in general, but of His kindness to himself" (*PF* 136). The narrator negates this idea by saying that "the being that could be unfair to a beetle could



not be God, could not make a beetle" (*PF* 136).

Then suddenly, Drake inherits a large amount of money. Instead of rejoicing, he feels that God was angry with him for "grumbling" "at His dealings with" him, and, therefore, "He has cast [him] off" and "has given [him his] own way with such a vengeance" (*PF* 141). Drake says in conversation with Wingfold, "O my God! how shall I live in the world with a hundred thousand pounds instead of my Father in heaven!" (*PF* 143). Wingfold asks, "Then you would willingly give up this large fortune [ . . . ] and return to your former condition?" (*PF* 143). Drake answers in the affirmative, but he makes one condition: "Rather than not be able to pray—I would! I would! [ . . . ]—if only He would give me enough to pay my debts and not have to beg of other people" (*PF* 143). However, a moment later, he cries, "No, no, Lord! Forgive me. I will not think of conditions. Thy will be done! Take the money and let me be a debtor and a beggar if Thou wilt, only let me pray to Thee; and do Thou make it up to my creditors" (*PF* 143). Wingfold exclaims in his heart, "Here [is] victory!" (*PF* 143).

Then one day, Drake takes a walk with his daughter Dorothy. The sun is low and dazzling, and "they seemed feeling their way out of the light into the shadow" (*PF* 158). Drake says: "This is like life," "our eyes can best see from under the shadow of afflictions" (*PF* 158), and Dorothy returns: "I would rather it were from under the shadow of God's wings" (*PF* 158). "So it is!" exclaims Drake, "Afflictions are but the shadow of His wings" (*PF* 158). This insightful daughter goes on to say that nobody is poor "except those that can't be sure of God" (*PF* 161). Then Drake realizes: "It was not my poverty—it was not being sure of God that crushed me" (*PF* 161).

On their way home, they meet Polwarth, and while saluting to each other, Polwarth calls his asthma "a friendly devil" (*PF* 162). Seeing that Drake is surprised at the expression, Polwarth explains by referring to St. Paul's words: "There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure" (*PF* 163). Polwarth continues: "[A]m I not right in speaking of such a demon as a friendly one? He was a gift from God"; "I begin to suspect that never, until we see a thing plainly a gift of God, can we be sure that we see it right" (*PF* 163). Then he asserts that he *is* a happy man (*PF* 163).

On afflictions and happiness, MacDonald also sheds light through an episode of the young hero Richard in *There and Back*. Richard tries earnestly to help a poor suffering girl, and he imagines God to be a tyrant who is "sitting up there in his glory, and looking down unmoved upon her wretchedness!" (*TB* 158). To this, the narrator says:

Ought he not even now to have been capable of thinking that there might be a being with a design for his creatures yet better than *merely* to make them happy? What if, that gained, the other must follow! (*TB* 158).

### John Wesley's Porter Episode

Polwarth is a gate keeper of Osterfield park, and he plays a very important part in Curate Wingfold's spiritual awakening. I found a similar episode<sup>5</sup> concerning John Wesley (1703-1791). John Telford writes in *The Life of John Wesley*<sup>6</sup> (1886):

When he went to Oxford,<sup>7</sup> Wesley still "said his prayers," both in public and private, and read the Scriptures, with other devotional books, especially comments on the New Testament. He had not any notion of inward holiness, but went on "habitually, and for the most part very contentedly [. . .]." (Telford, Chapter 4)

However, meeting with a gate-keeper changes his life.

A conversation which he had late one night with the porter of his college made a lasting impression on his mind, and convinced him that there was something in religion which he had not yet found. At first Wesley indulged in a little pleasantry but when he found that this man had only one coat, and that though nothing had passed his lips that day but a drink of water, his heart was full of gratitude, he said, "You thank God when you have nothing to wear, nothing to eat, and no bed to lie upon. What else do you thank Him for?" "I thank Him," answered the porter, "that He has given me my life and being, and a heart to love Him, and a desire to serve Him."<sup>8</sup> (Telford, Chapter 4)

As for Wingfold, he says in the early part of the novel that he gives sermons by only reading what his uncle wrote and left him as legacy. When Polwarth asks him if he ever preached a sermon that "came out of [his] own heart," he answers "No," and goes on to say that it seemed to him unreasonable to preach what "he really knows nothing about" (*TW* 72). Then, as referred to earlier, this gate-keeper tells him how God guided him to the Light, and helps Wingfold's spiritual growth.

## Conclusion

In *Frankenstein*, Shelley raises questions about the Creator's responsibility, and she seems to suggest that if there be a God, He treats people partially and that some people are not equally as blessed as others. Her monster asserts that when his creator denies happiness to him, he has no choice but to be bitter and revengeful. While complaints are made against the creator's dealings with the monster, the creator is excluded in the description of what comfort and shelter the monster finds in suffering.

Even though MacDonald sympathizes with Shelley in some respects because it is "right in refusing to believe in such a God" (*TB* 158) as she imagines, MacDonald thinks that her image of God is wrong. Feeling that the monster's desperate cry is shared by many people, MacDonald wants to help them by

shedding light on the true image of God. Through his novels, he shows that God loves all his creatures impartially; afflictions are His gifts to make us grow and see better; and amid suffering, God Himself becomes our refuge.

MacDonald asserts: Our real problem is not the situations we find ourselves in, but the sins in our own heart, and misery only comes from our lack of trust in God; therefore, instead of demanding God to make us happy first, we must trust Him and pray that His will be done, and then we shall find ourselves already happy and rich in Him.

God loved us first, and each one is made in His image and given His light in our souls. In following the light, we come to know a truer image of God, who is the origin of the very light within us.

### Excursus

#### MacDonald's Influence on Conan Doyle

In *Inklings Forever*, VI (2008), I showed that MacDonald's *David Elginbrod* influenced Doyle's writing of the Sherlock Holmes stories, especially *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1902). I have found another possible connection between the above Holmes story and MacDonald's novel. In *Thomas Wingfold*, George Bascombe decides to search a pitshaft into which Leopold says he had thrown his cloak and mask soon after committing murder. The scene of the crime was "not far from a little moorland village," and there he stays at an inn, "pretending to be a geologist out for a holiday" (*TW* 357). He "beg[s] permission to go down one of the pits, on pretext of examining the coal-strata," and begins "to search about as if examining the indications of the strata," and finds the mask (*TW* 357-58).

Similarly, Stapleton, in *the Hound of the Baskervilles*, hangs around the "moor" under the pretext of his interest in botany and zoology, but his purpose is a crime. Stapleton tells Watson, "[ . . . ] with my strong tastes for botany and zoology, I find an unlimited field of work here, and my sister is as devoted to Nature as I am" (*Baskerville* 75).

### Notes

1. Concerning how wrong a human sense of justice could be, MacDonald shows his view in *Paul Faber, Surgeon*. In the story, Faber would not forgive his wife for her past, and feels that it was him that was wronged. The narrator goes: "Ah men! men! gentlemen! was there ever such a poor sneaking scarecrow of an idol as that gaping straw-stuffed inanity you worship, and call *honor*? It is not Honor; it is but *your* honor. It is neither gold, nor silver, nor honest copper, but a vile, worthless pinchbeck" (*PF* 358).
2. Ms. Hashiguchi is a researcher at Kurume University's Institute of Comparative Studies of International Cultures and Societies, and she studies Classical Japanese Literature.
3. The above discussion concerning the Lord's Prayer and Elginbrodde's epitaph gives deeper insight into what MacDonald means through his novel, *What's Mine's Mine*. In my previous study, I examined how Ian and Alister, the hero brothers in *What's Mine's Mine*, try to follow Jesus and learn to forgive their enemies; and how the idea is connected with MacDonald's idea on the Atonement, or At-one-ment (see *George MacDonald's Challenging Theology of the Atonement, Suffering, and Death*). The brothers' understanding Jesus' command to "turn

the other cheek” through obeying it may be illuminated by the above argument.

4. Rachel (Polwarth’s niece) in the *Wingfold* trilogy and Richard in *There and Back* are sometimes called “monster” in the stories. The former has a dwarf like figure as her uncle does, and the latter was “web-footed” when he was born.

5. I learned Wesley’s porter episode from Mr. Shinichi Takeda’s BA thesis: *Study on John Wesley* (presented to the faculty of literature, Kurume University, 2009). He quoted the porter episode from abridged Japanese version of *The Life of John Wesley* by John Telford (translated by Masanobu Fukamachi [Jordan publishing]). Mr. Takeda is now a student in the department of theology of Seinan University. In his recent mail, he writes: “Now I think that the porter’s words correspond with the words from the Bible ‘Emmanuel—God with us’ (Matthew 1:23). Even without food and clothes, the porter is saying that the presence of God is what’s most precious and dearest to him. The porter experienced the grace of God Emmanuel, and he leads his life depending only on Him.”

6. As far as I know, Telford’s above mentioned book was published in 1886, which is after *Thomas Wingfold* was published (1876). George MacDonald might have read or heard of the porter episode somewhere before Telford’s book was published.

7. Telford writes that Wesley entered Oxford University in 1720 at the age of seventeen, and that, from 1727 to 29, he “acted as his father’s curate” (Telford, chapter 4).

8. Wesley’s porter’s remark about what he has to thank God for might be reflected in the above mentioned prayer by Drake: “Take the money and let me be a debtor and a beggar if Thou wilt, only let me pray to Thee. [ . . . ]” In addition, according to Telford, Wesley himself was in debt, and his mother “was much concerned for a kind friend that had lent him ten pounds [ . . . ].”; “This friend afterwards paid himself out of Wesley’s exhibition” (Telford, Chapter 4).

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