



"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16

SKETCHES OF WESLEYAN PREACHERS

By Robert A. West

If the chylde be of nature inclyned (as many have ben) to peynte with a pen, he shoulde not be therfrom withdrawn, or nature be rebuked, whiche is to hym benevolent. -- Elyot

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PREFACE

The author of the following sketches has occasionally felt no little surprise at the many points of difference in the practical working of Methodism in America and England. Especially has he wondered, considering that the two countries are in such constant intercourse, that comparatively so little is known of even the more prominent ministers of the English Wesleyan church. (Historical note: There were many years of distrust and greatly reduced communication between the two both before and after the War of Independence in which the Americans solicited significant aid to their cause from the British arch-enemy of the time: the treacherous French who were eager to bring England back into the Popish fold. This was even though the British voters would not let their forces much oppose the Americans since they were all their emigrated children. The common man in Britain did not appreciate the high-handed way he was treated by the nobility any more than their offspring in the colonies did. Really, it was a sad civil war in which everybody lost -including the Methodists. ES)

Having had peculiar facilities for acquaintance with some of these great and good men, it occurred to him that a series of pen-portraits, if drawn with truth, might be acceptable to the American reader. He was the more willing to write such sketches because it would afford an opportunity of incidentally illustrating some of the points of difference referred to. The sketches were originally commenced in the Christian Advocate and Journal, and were continued through several numbers. The whole of those thus published are, with two exceptions, embodied in this volume; having been rewritten, that they might be more worthy of this more permanent form. A considerable portion of the volume, however, now appears for the first time; and the author believes that the additional sketches will be found as true to the original, and as interesting, as those previously published. He cannot desire that they should be received with more general kindness and approval.

A more imposing style might have been adopted in the composition of these portraits, and more criticism indulged in, had the writer been so disposed; but he had another and higher aim – to familiarize the Methodist Episcopal church in the United States with the pulpit and pastoral character of the Methodist ministry in the “fatherland;” the working of Methodism itself, its institutions, &c.

If he has done anything to strengthen the bonds of union between the two large and influential churches, or to stimulate the one to emulate the other in anything which may more effectually carry out the designs of Methodism's

honored founder, he has attained the end he was most desirous to gain.

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1. JABEZ BUNTING, D. D.

“Never lived gentleman of greater merit,
Hope or abiliment to rule a kingdom.”
“The monarch-mind, the mystery of commanding,
The godlike power, the art Napoleon
Of winning, fettering, molding, wielding, banding,
The hearts of millions, until they move as one.”

-- Halleck --

The Rev. Dr. Bunting is, for obvious reasons, entitled to precedence in these sketches. He is the greatest among many great men, and stands by common consent at the head of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection. Unostentatiously wearing the honors of his admitted position, he also endures uncomplainingly, for Methodism's sake, the combined attacks of its enemies, churchmen of "high" and of "low" degree; "Dissenters" of every grade; the "people called Methodists" who have forsaken the fold, or, remaining within its inclosure, are estranged in heart

from its discipline and institutions – these all make the reverend gentleman the butt for their hostility. The contumely, reproach, scandal, and animosity, with which at one time Methodism and Methodists generally were assailed, seem in these latter days to be directed, with concentrated bitterness, against the Rev. Jabez Bunting.

This fact must necessarily enter into any sketch of that gentleman, and a brief digression must therefore be made at the outset, for the sake of inquiring into the causes of this feeling toward one whose private character all acknowledge to be unimpeachable, and who has never been convicted, nor by those who best know him even suspected, of unfaithfulness to the trust which his brethren have, to an unusual extent, tacitly reposed in him; and who perhaps less than any equally public man has assailed those who differ from him, or returned railing for railing.

We say a digression, because in prosecuting the inquiry some things must be premised, not legitimately entering into a sketch of an individual; to wit, the relative position of the great religious denominations in England, and the prevalent opinion, erroneous though it be, of Dr. Bunting's power in the body to which he belongs. It is common in England to divide the Protestant denominations into three classes – the Established church, Methodists, and Dissenters. The division is just, although the high-church party profess to regard the Methodists as Dissenters, while the Dissenters themselves, especially the political portion of them, indignantly deny the identity. In reality the Wesleyan Methodists (for the "New Connection" are avowedly Dissenters) occupy as distinct a position as either of the other divisions of the great Protestant Christian church. They are not Dissenters, properly so called, inasmuch as they do not object to the principle of an Established church, and have never united with its opponents in seeking its overthrow as an establishment, or withholding that support to which by law it is entitled. They have aided it in the time of its peril, rather, however, by their general influence than by any denominational action. They left it under no protest against its fundamental principles, but because of its exclusive, inconvenient, and burdensome practice. To this day, no anti-Established church action has emanated from the Wesleyan Methodist Societies collectively. They are, in fact, as a body, simply non-conformists on the ground of expediency, holding the doctrines, and, as far as seems appropriate for their peculiar sphere of action, adopting the forms and usages, and even the liturgy, of the church of England.

As a numerous, and now wealthy and intelligent body, and a neutral or middle party, they hold the balance of power between the two antagonistic denominations. By going over to either, they might secure immunity from much of the animosity now shown toward them. This they have hitherto steadily refused to do. Within the last few years it has become well understood that to this purpose they will adhere, under whatever provocation they may suffer, or overtures receive, from either party.

Their reply has at all times been, in effect, "We are doing a great work and cannot come down to dispute with either of you about non-essentials or ecclesiastical polity." They content themselves with occasional co-operation with either party, when some great principle of civil or religious liberty is periled, or some vast triumph of benevolence or Christian principle is to be achieved. But they resolutely stand aloof from ecclesiastico-political amalgamation with one or the other. This we believe to be the exact position of the Wesleyan Methodist Connection at the present day. At the conference of 1847, the body numbered in Great Britain alone, not including those "on trial," three hundred and thirty-nine thousand three hundred and seventy-nine; in Ireland, twenty-four thousand six hundred and thirty-three; making, with those "on trial," at least three hundred and seventy thousand, under the pastoral care and influence of thirteen hundred and fifty authorized and ordained ministers. [1] Their influence, therefore, upon political and ecclesiastical questions is known to be great; and their bias is generally supposed to be toward the Establishment rather than toward the Dissenters. For this they have been assailed by those who have gone out from them, but have retained, with some qualifying prefix, the name of Methodists. Indeed this has been frequently assigned as one of the reasons for secession; but it is not within the writer's knowledge that a contrary tendency – a bias toward Dissent – has ever been put forward as a cause for separation from Wesleyan Methodism. Here then is a sufficient explanation why the Wesleyans are made to suffer under a double fire; the adherents of the church are well aware that the Methodists have permanently left the Establishment, so far as submission to its practice is concerned, and are jealous of their independence and growing influence; the "anti-church and state men" are annoyed that they will not throw their influence into the scale with Dissenters, and seek to drive them to that course, knowing, or at least suspecting, that Wesleyan neutrality is the principal impediment to their success.

As assailants, necessarily so from the existing order of things, the Dissenters are naturally more exasperated at this neutrality than are their opponents, to whom it is valuable next to active co-operation.

But in ascertaining why Dr. Bunting should be individually selected for reproach and abuse, another fact must be referred to, namely, the common error that the reverend gentleman possesses an absolute, or at least positive, personal power in the Wesleyan Conference. On this ignorant assumption he is mercilessly assailed for all that body does or leaves undone; what are accounted its Bias of omission and commission being alike laid to his charge. While indignant at the injustice, discourtesy, and malignity, of many of the attacks upon Dr. Bunting, we have also been “exceedingly filled with contempt” at the utter ignorance of Wesleyan economy displayed by his open or anonymous assailants. They seem to suppose that the government of the Wesleyan Methodists is a “one-man power,” -- an absolute monarchy of the most absolute kind; that the four hundred and sixty-five thousand of its members, leaders, stewards, trustees, and local preachers, and its two thousand itinerant ministers, live, move, and have their being, in Dr. Bunting; and think, speak, and act, only as he gives them permission. Truly these traducers of the great Wesleyan body and the reverend gentleman “understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.” They know not the intelligence and independence of the Wesleyan clergy and laity, which are surpassed by those of no body of clergy and laity on the face of the earth. The Rev. Jabez Bunting, D.D., influential in council as he is known to be, has not and cannot have any strictly personal power in his official relations to the connection. The acknowledged principles by which the body is governed forbid it. In conference his vote counts but as one. He can do nothing contrary to, or aside from, the laws which govern the conference, and to which both ministers and people are subject. Nor could he with impunity leave undone anything which those laws require him to do. The rules and usages of the connection are not in his keeping; he cannot of his own will or power repeal, amend, or enact, a single clause, or alter a solitary word in the code. Whatever proposition he may make has to pass through the same ordeal as one proposed by any other member of the conference, to the good sense of which body it must commend itself, if it is to be approved or adopted by them.

Wesleyan Methodism has, strictly speaking, no written “constitution,” as we understand the word.

Certain principles and guards are established and perpetuated in the “Deed of Declaration,” but that deed does not define a full constitutional method of internal government. Usage, more than written law, governs in all the proceedings of the conference. But there are rules clearly defined, binding upon and mutually protecting preachers and people, and these are to be preserved in their letter as well as in their spirit. One of these provides that any law affecting the societies, passed by the conference, before it can be binding upon the people shall be submitted to them in their quarterly meetings, and be approved by a majority. Suppose that Dr. Bunting has conceived a measure which he thinks will be beneficial to the church at large. He must first propose it in the conference. There it may be canvassed with the utmost freedom. Every one who doubts its propriety has only to send up his name to the president, as an intimation that he wishes to speak upon the subject, and he can state all his objections as forcibly as his ability admits. After free discussion the sense of the conference is taken upon it; and if the members are not satisfied of its expediency, they can postpone, or entirely set it aside, by their vote. If approved by them, it still has to be submitted to the quarterly meeting in every circuit, and cannot become law without their sanction. If a measure be proposed not affecting the people, but the preachers only, it still has to pass through the ordeal of the conference, as above described. So that the one-man power ascribed to Dr. Bunting has, in reality, no existence in the Wesleyan body. That Dr. Bunting wields a vast influence, in conference and out of it, is undeniable. But inasmuch as every proposition emanating from him is intelligently discussed in that body, and if adopted, is so by consent of the whole, or a vote of the majority, it is unfair to lay the entire responsibility upon the reverend gentleman, even admitting that the measure is in any way reprehensible. Yet his opponents, jealous of his influence, and unable to counteract or curtail it, wrongfully speak of it as a tyrannical and absolute power. What that influence is, and how acquired, we shall endeavor to show hereafter.

We cannot, however, complete the inquiry with which we started, without to some extent forestalling judgment upon that point. In conscientiously assigning the reasons why Dr. Bunting has been so much assailed and calumniated, we must express our belief that his inflexible devotion to the permanent interests of Methodism is at the foundation of all the reproach that has been cast upon him. In other words, his greatness is their grievance. No storm can drive him from the field he thinks it his duty to occupy. He will not stoop to bandy words with his opponents, or relinquish his purpose because it is misunderstood or misrepresented, or quail for a moment under a torrent of even the most bitter invective. He relies upon his own integrity, like Nehemiah of old. The author of “Wesleyan Centenary Takings,” who cannot be suspected of regarding our present subject with a too favorable judgment, says of him: “He is great in mind, and great in influence; too great to be forgiven; if he were less so, it

might be borne. This is the secret. It is the hostility of opposite views and sentiments, with less of interest at stake than there ought to be to warrant such hostility; and the prejudice excited is the feeling of the vanquished – a struggle for supremacy – the mortification of seeing another where we wish to be ourselves – the envy of a height we cannot attain.” Never was greater truth uttered, and the frankness of the avowal is the more honorable to the author, as he is known to differ on many points from the gentleman of whom he thus speaks. Add to these views the fact that Dr. Bunting’s whole life has been spent in consolidating, popularizing, and strengthening, the institutions of Methodism – that in times of imminent peril, from disaffection and clamor, his wise counsels and vast influence have been successfully exerted in keeping the main body, of both preachers and people, within the ancient landmarks – and we have, without doubt, the true reason why the reverend gentleman has so many implacable enemies and bitter assailants. We leave this subject for the present, as in the prosecution of this sketch topics may again come up incidentally bearing upon it.

The recent portraits of Dr. Bunting, given in the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine and elsewhere, are upon the whole correct. The full length figure in the great picture of the Wesleyan Centenary meeting, published by Mr. Agnew, of Manchester, (England,) is also very good, except, perhaps, that it is scarcely heavy enough. He is about five feet ten or perhaps eleven inches in height, although the comparatively narrow or elongated form of the upper part of the body gives him an appearance of being even taller. He is of a corpulent frame, and erect in his carriage. The face is not exactly round, neither can it be called oval; it has a pleasant, dignified, placid expression, and when in entire repose is indicative of suavity and gentleness. The eyes are small and of a light blue-gray; the forehead is good; the head extremely bald, the skin fine and glittering, but rather pale, save when the gentleman is excited in preaching or debate, when a deep flush covers the entire forehead and crown. When that crimson glow appears, the hearer may know that the speaker is about to “pour the stream of eloquence,

With scathing lightning fraught.”

His dress is invariably black, a straight-breasted coat, and, latterly, pantaloons; generally, though not at all times, he uses a walking-stick, and as commonly carries a well-worn umbrella under his arm. He walks leisurely; can always spare a few moments to look into a bookseller’s window, or to linger at a second-hand book-stall; and has altogether a comely, comfortable appearance. His disposition is somewhat reserved, except among his intimate friends. With these, however, as Mr. Everett observes, “say after supper in the evening, his leg meanwhile laid along the sofa or across a chair, he can talk playfully and delightedly, till morning if you please, but always wisely and prudently. His manners are not polished, but easy, noble, and slightly courteous, without pride or affectation, and yet without any redundancy of condescension. He is, in short, a man of apparently simple and amiable character; and though possessed of wit, is sparing of it in conversation, being more partial to discussion than to sallies of a lighter kind.” The picture is so life-like and complete that nothing can be added to it; it represents the reverend gentleman, too, in one of his most pleasing aspects – his social character.

Our present subject has so many prominent characteristics – we had almost said distinct characters – that it is necessary to view him in their separate aspects, if we would have a just conception of the whole man. There is, moreover, this crowning glory, that he positively excels in each. As a “Wesleyan preacher” he is first to be considered. His character in this respect is unique. He has no parallel. Other men have gained legitimate and permanent eminence and influence by long years of patient study and labor; he sprang at once to the pinnacle, where he has continued to this day, without seeming effort, to maintain his foothold. Other men commenced their ministerial life with their theological systems imperfectly or but partially defined, and have matured them by elaborately collating writers upon the subject; he appeared among his brethren, “a Hercules from his cradle,” with his theological views matured and established, clear, comprehensive, and evangelical. Those who heard him in his early days say, that as a preacher he has neither advanced nor retrograded, simply exchanging “that popularity which, in connection with his extraordinary powers, belonged to his youth, for that respectability by age to which early life could not establish a substantial claim.” And the testimony of these witnesses is corroborated by the fact, that the sermon on “Justification by Faith,” founded on Romans viii, 17, published in the earlier years of his ministry, remains unaltered and unimprovable in plan, matter, and diction -- “perfect and entire, lacking nothing” -- as when it was first delivered, nearly forty years ago. The writer never heard a sermon from him which was not in itself a complete body of divinity, all naturally flowing from the subject, and no part of which could be omitted without marring the perfection and beauty of the whole. This is the peculiarity and charm of his preaching. His

discourses are never confined to one topic, but embrace a variety, through which light beams from within, and heat that welds in inseparable union the several portions, or fuses them into one perfect whole.

More particularly – we must speak of the gentleman in later times, say for the last ten or twelve years. In earlier days we apprehend, and indeed know from report, there was much more of physical energy in his pulpit services, than within the period referred to. The impetuous bursts of vehement eloquence, which we have occasionally heard at the close of a sermon, were then more frequent, and perhaps more overpowering, but that is probably the main difference between the younger and the older man. When we occasionally sat under his ministry, his appearance in the pulpit was dignified and natural. His favorite attitude while preaching was with the fingers of the left hand partially inserted between the leaves of the Bible, toward the lower corner, the right hand at liberty, now lying easily upon the open page, now gently raised with a graceful movement, and now pushed forward with increasing emphasis of utterance. The reverend gentleman's action rarely extends beyond this for the first three-fourths of the sermon. He enters the pulpit and commences the service, as he glides into his discourse, with the most perfect avoidance of formality or effort. You look up to the pulpit, and it is empty; in a few moments you look again, and are almost surprised to find it occupied by the preacher, possibly just rising from his knees, and ready at once to enter upon the service of the sanctuary. Everything about him is easy and natural. No adjustment of the person, apparel, or attitude, no hesitation about beginning, "no appearance of starting," offends the most fastidious of his congregation: "he glides into the service like an ethereal spirit, and conducts it like an apostle." The true greatness of the man is often, though not invariably, revealed in the first prayer. If prevalence with God in prayer be a criterion of Christian character and attainments, as undoubtedly it is, then hath He who "answereth by fire" abundantly and oftentimes set his seal upon the Rev. Dr.

Bunting as a man after his own heart. We have never heard any one who so mightily wrestled with God and prevailed, as on some and not infrequent occasions did our present subject, unless it were John Smith, of whom mention is made in this volume. Bramwell and Stoner we never heard. But there was this difference between Mr. Smith and Dr. Bunting; the former was vociferous in his earnestness, the latter was simply powerful. His whole soul seemed drawn out into direct communion with God; he seemed to rise up to the very mercy-seat, to lay hold upon the horns of the altar and lift himself into the presence of Deity, and there to importune until the Shekinah beamed forth in his glory, and the heavenly influence, shed first upon him, diffused itself through the whole congregation, like the precious ointment that ran down to the skirts of Aaron's priestly garments; or as though, with the mighty lever of believing intercession, he had forced open the gate of heaven, and the flood of glory had burst suddenly upon the waiting congregation. How comprehensive were his intercessions, how earnest his supplications; how truly he pleaded with the Most High, and how effectually, pen may not describe. How "good" it was "to be there," even they cannot fully tell who shared in the glory which, on such occasions, was revealed. "The day shall declare it." Dr. Bunting commences his sermon in a natural, even conversational, tone. The voice is full and agreeable, though lacking variety. This defect, however, is partially atoned for by its flexibility and power. In its middle tones it is most pleasing, being then sweet and persuasive, if the mere voice may be so characterized. Sometimes, toward the close of a discourse, when the preacher is for a few moments carried away by his theme, it is raised to a positive scream, but this is very seldom, as the reverend gentleman holds all his faculties under a very strict control in the pulpit. The introduction to his subject is natural, and by the time he approaches the division of his text, and proceeds to apportion its various topics, the hearer's mind is well prepared to fall in with the preacher's plan, and experiences something akin to surprise that the same train of ideas and amplification of thought have not already occurred to him in connection with the passage on which the preacher is dilating. This is one of the great charms of Dr. Bunting's ministry, and in no preacher have we known this peculiar excellence so strongly displayed. He is as far removed from the "startling" school of preachers as light is from darkness. There is nothing *ad captandum* about his style; all is plain, simple, natural, and so expressed, that hypercriticism is at fault to find a blemish or suggest an emendation. Having in his own mind (though not always announcing his plan to the congregation) well arranged the main and subordinate branches of his subject, like an angel of light moving in the courts and avenues of the temple of truth; or like the sun gently but perceptibly emerging from the horizon, first revealing, then illumining, and at length shortening, the shadows of every object, until in his noon-day splendor the entire circumference of vision is flooded with light; so Dr. Bunting sheds over his multiform theme a pure and steady light, which reveals each object in all its bearings and relations to its kindred subject or idea. An intelligent hearer, especially if he have any knowledge of theology, or love for the science, cannot for a moment withdraw his attention from the preacher. The

train of thought is so consecutive, each thread of the entire web is so intimately interwoven with the other, the series of arguments so logically put and arranged, and every part of the whole so mutually dependent, that nothing could be spared without marring the beauty and symmetry of the structure. His mind is imbued with theology. While undeniably a reader to no ordinary extent, especially of the older divines, what he utters is strikingly his own; everything thus gathered having been so thoroughly digested and transformed into aliment, as to be incorporated with his own mental constitution, and is seen only in the vigor, maturity, and fullness, of his thoughts. We know no man who, in theological disquisition, more readily perceives and more clearly points out nice distinctions, and is more precise in definitions; while withal there is so much heart in all he says, and often such delicate pathos, that his congregation are always refreshed as they drink of the consolation which, to quote again from Mr. Everett, is, "without apparent effort, pumped up out of the depths of his own mind, and is as fertilizing and refreshing as the stream from the hills." Dr. Bunting's defect as a preacher, if defect it be, is that he preaches too long. Probably this has more the appearance of a defect as age has increased upon him, and his physical energies have somewhat abated. Indeed in converse with a friend, who heard him in London but a few months ago, we learned that many of the audience retired before the sermon was concluded, a very unusual thing with an English Wesleyan congregation. It is now probably eight years since the sound of his voice was familiar to our ears. We then heard him preach an "occasional sermon" in Manchester, and received the impression that age and much labor of thought were having their effect upon him. In his palmy days he was never known to misapply or recall a word, or to hesitate in the selection of the choicest words for the expression of his thoughts. Pure, chaste, eminently correct, Saxon-English diction distinguished him above every preacher of his day. He was perfect in synonymy. But on the occasion referred to he not infrequently hesitated, recalled his words, and even once or twice became perplexed by the entanglement of his sentences, and at the close of his discourse, when seemingly about to rise into one of those impassioned bursts of eloquence which have so often thrilled and electrified his audiences, he suddenly reined in, evidently mistrusting his powers, and betraying that distrust by a dejection of countenance, which, though brief in the expression, was so full of feeling, that the recollection of it is present to the writer with every remembrance of Dr. Bunting. It seemed as though then, for the first time, the conviction had flashed upon his mind that his faculties were losing their long-sustained vigor. The subject was a matter of much conversation and sorrow among his friends at the time; but I have not the means of knowing whether the embarrassment was temporary, arising from some transient disturbing cause, or whether it was of so permanent a character as his friends anticipated. My impression is, that he has preached less frequently since then, than in former times.

The doctor is more remarkable for the excellence than the number of his special sermons – meaning those which he preaches on great public occasions. Like the sermon on "Justification by Faith," already referred to, they seem to undergo little, if any, alteration after their first production.

And yet they are ever fresh in the delivery. He does not hesitate to repeat a discourse before the same people, and apprise them that he is aware of the repetition. The writer has heard three times, though in different places, the discourse on, -- "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha," and there petition of others, the texts of which are not at this moment in remembrance. It does not seem likely that he keeps any register of places and texts, where and from which he preaches, because we cannot suppose that it is either from necessity or indolence that this repetition arises. Far otherwise. A case in point occurs to us. He was solicited to preach an occasional sermon at a comparatively small circuit town, where he had never before occupied the pulpit. He consented, and selected for his text, "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not out to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty," a powerful sermon, by the way, which would shut up in condemnation thousands of professors in the present day. A second time he was invited, and he took for his text the passage already quoted, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ," &c. A very kind and friendly intercourse sprung up between him and the people, and a third time he favored them with his ministrations, this time preaching from, "Behold I set before you this day a blessing and a curse," &c., dwelling principally upon the curse as the penalty of disobedience. A fourth application was made to him from the same place. A minor though prior engagement of some kind induced him to decline the invitation. "Say, doctor," said the applicant, "you have three times pronounced a curse upon us, surely you will not refuse to come and bless us." "What's that?" said Dr. Bunting. The facts were repeated to him. He smiled, and immediately replied, "O yes, my brother, I'll come down and bless you before I die, and if God spares me, I will accept your invitation." He did so, and preached from these words, "surely blessing I will bless thee." The sermon was said to be one of the richest discourses he ever

delivered.

Perhaps no preacher has appeared more frequently in print than Dr. Bunting. His are sermons, indeed, not difficult to report, and very profitable to read. Hence, whenever he is within reasonable distance of the metropolis, the publishers of the "Pulpit," the "Wesleyan Preacher," and other periodicals devoted to the publication of sermons, dispatch reporters to take down his discourse, greatly to the annoyance of the reverend gentleman, who, in common with his brethren, has a strong aversion to appearing in print, at least in such prints under such circumstances. Some characteristic anecdotes are current respecting him in this connection. Once when preaching at Hammersmith, in the suburbs of London, he saw a reporter in the gallery busily taking notes. Pausing in the introduction, he quietly said, "I see a reporter there, in the front pew of the gallery. I beg to inform him that not only has this discourse been more than once preached by me, but by referring to the "Pulpit" of such a date (naming it) he will find it there reported, and may save himself a second desecration of the Sabbath and the house of God." The reporter, however, was not made of such modest stuff, that even such a reproof could prevent the fulfillment of his contract with those who sent him. Equally pointed was his reproof of one of the offending tribe on another occasion, but equally fruitless in its result. "Young man," said he, "I see you are busy taking notes of my sermon.

If you wish to remember it, you should try and do so when you go home, and not disturb a whole congregation, peaceably assembled for the worship of God." We are not aware, however, that he ever resorted to legal measures to hinder the proprietors of such periodicals from publishing his discourses, or that the question has ever been fairly tried in the English courts. Soon after the Rev.

Dr. Harris rose into deserved popularity by the publication of his prize essay, entitled "Mammon," he acceded to the request of the Wesleyan Missionary Committee to preach the annual sermon before the Society at the May anniversary in London, when he delivered his beautiful discourse on "The Witnessing Church." The reporters for the "Pulpit" were there in full force, and in the next publication a very fair report of the discourse appeared. Dr. Harris immediately served the publishers with an injunction, and they would not venture upon a defense, but compromised the matter by suppressing the publication, and paying all expenses.

We believe that Dr. Bunting is even greater as a pleader than as a preacher; but here we are compelled to speak from report, as the arena on which he has principally figured in this character – the Wesleyan conference – is not an open body. We have occasionally heard him from the missionary platform, and twice during the great Centenary meeting in Manchester. His addresses of this character are models of propriety, full of great principles and impressive views of the subject under discussion, and he does not stay to repeat what is already known. To familiar topics, arguments, or facts, a mere passing allusion is made, and the speaker goes on to carry out the principle or discuss its results. In committee he never speechifies, seldom talking above five minutes at a time, unless he is charged with the introduction of some important measure; but contents himself with vigilantly watching the debate, occasionally cooling down any undue excitement, and narrowing the discussion by judiciously pruning it of any extraneous matter with which members of less discernment or business capacity may have encumbered it. He is familiar with the various methods of staving off a decision, and uses them when he foresees a conclusion which he thinks premature or injurious to the interests of the cause he advocates. But, we repeat, it is in the conference that his greatness as a pleader – his consummate art and power at replication – is most apparent. There we cannot follow him; but as we desire to give as perfect a portrait of the man as our means will permit, we copy, the more willingly as it has not been published in America, from the "Wesleyan Centenary Takings," the following, which we have been frequently assured, by members of that body, is to the life: --

"See him: there he sits on the platform, surrounded by the leading members of the conference, his elbow on the table and his chin embedded in the palm of his hand. A subject of importance being on the tapis [on the tapis (of a subject) under consideration or discussion – Oxford Dict.] and the speaker being low or at a distance the hand is speedily relieved of the chin and placed behind the ear, where it remains as a substitute for a trumpet gathering together the words, while the sense which it is intended to aid drinks in the sound. An occasional note is made on a slip of paper, or the back of a letter, in the course of a protracted discussion; but memory, which rarely ever fails him, is mostly depended upon. Now, he is calm and dignified; but in an instant the scene is changed. The speaker has the misfortune to oppose some favorite theory, to trench upon some of the peculiarities of Methodism, or belongs to the other side of the house: that moment, the eye of our pleader is darted like the eye of a lynx along the line of sound, and either quails or rouses the person who has gained his attention. He again appears tranquil; but it is

the tranquillity of a man who is pondering upon what has been said. Speaker succeeds speaker, till at length silence ensues; and, during the momentary pause, he looks round: but no one assaying to rise, he considers his own time to have come. He loves the closing speech; and now that he is on his feet, let the eye be thrown around the audience, and all will be seen on the tip-toe – all will be still to the ear. The first feeling in operation in the breasts of previous speakers, refers as much to themselves as the subject; and the first thought in the mind of the mere hearer, is inadvertently directed to the same quarter, and is followed up with anxiety or pleasure – looking forward to see how it will fare with such as have thus entered the arena of debate, as well as toward the fate of the question in which he himself may have an interest, and which absolutely hangs upon the breath, and is to be decided by him upon whom every eye is now fixed, as by fascination. Listen to him: he takes, perhaps, at first, a dispassionate view of the general question, then gives you his own opinion; next goes on to establish certain positions; notices the remarks of previous speakers, so far as they seem to interfere with his own sentiments; and, lastly, proceeds to the formal reply, in which he often takes upon himself the *onus probendi*, either classifying the arguments of his opponents, or taking up their objections separately, as may best suit his purpose; encircling himself all the while in a tower of strength, from whose impregnable walls he nods defiance to all his assailants. Very often, at a moment, when a man is congratulating himself on the probability of a happy escape, or of finding his arguments valid, by a less early notice, he will come down upon him in an instant, like an unexpected flash of lightning, broad and vivid, shivering to pieces, by a single stroke, the whole superstructure he had reared, and upon which he had long gazed with the fondness of a parent on a favorite child – compelling him at the time by its glare to shrink back into himself. On these occasions, he can be sarcastic, solemn, playful, or otherwise. But he never approaches a subject without illuminating it, and rarely retires from the field without conquest; followed by the smiles of his friends, and leaving the opposing powers in a state of suspense or blank astonishment.

“We feel unwilling to leave this part of his character, and yet we are afraid to proceed with it, owing to our incompetency to do it justice. We have heard pleaders at the bar, and statesmen in the senate, (a place, by the way, which he is very fond of attending,) but we solemnly aver, that, for reply, we never heard a near approach to him. His replies are like the set speeches of some of our first speakers; so full, so regular, so neat, so consecutive, so pertinent, so easy, so ready! He never talks for the sake of talking, to show off, or for the sake of conquest. He always has an object in view separate from himself, of which he never loses sight, and a subject creditable to his own intelligence.

In listening to him, Cicero rather than Demosthenes seems to haunt the mind; but then it is Cicero in his philosophical, rather than his oratorical character; his orations being mere claptraps for the mob. There is also something more stubborn in the composition of our modern orator; he is better qualified to face a storm: but still, we cannot refrain from adverting to Cicero, whose superiority was felt by all, whose wisdom commanded respect, and whose eloquence enraptured the auditor. Here we perceive a parallel. Every reply carries with it the mathematical precision of previous study, even when there has been no means of knowing what was about to be advanced by the opposing party; and all is conducted without parade, imparting light as unostentatiously as the sun, which, in return – where there is no clashing interest at stake, or the heart is not abandoned to prejudice – is received with as hearty a welcome. The whole, whether long or short, is as perfect as if it had been prepared months before, though only conceived – which shows the amazing power of conception and rapidity of thought – during the speech or speeches of those who may have preceded. There is no haffling [sic, a typo for halting? -- DVM], no tripping, not a point of importance omitted, not a question blinked; all is poured out with the freshness and ease of the lark singing his first morning carol. He has no set time for emphasis; but rises in feeling with the importance of his subject; and the people go up with him, till both gain the summit of the mount, and the latter feel it difficult to descend again, or stoop to common things. His eloquence is irresistible. Had he been brought up to the bar, or been trained for the senate, he would never have paused in his upward career, till he had either been premier or lord high chancellor; and where he is, he is a king among his subjects.

“Still proceeding with his character as a debater, it may be observed, that you always know where he is; but then, he knows also the exact position of his opponent. His presence of mind never forsakes him. No man makes fewer mistakes; and he never leaves an advantage unimproved. It is dangerous for an adversary to slumber or be off his guard in his presence. He is always awake himself, and, like the famous Erskine, is as daring as he is skillful; taking advantage of the least opening, and defending himself with caution. His fine spirit and courage, when let out, give vigor and direction to the whole, bearing down all resistance. He is not like some speakers, full of repetition,

recurring again and again to the same topic or view of the subject, till he has made the impression complete; he rarely goes back to the same ground, which, in the language of an eminent writer, he has 'utterly wasted by the tide of fire he has rolled along it.' He completes his work as he goes on. He has a preternatural quickness of apprehension, which enables him to see at a glance what costs other minds the labor of an investigation. It is this that makes ordinary business easy to him: and hence, he has been heard to say, that he could never make what some men call speeches: that his were all matters of mere detail in business. He is not only quick, but sure. And though he has fire, yet it is of that kind, that he has rarely the heat of passion to plead or regret. As the head of a party, he has none of its prejudices to plead, having no person to serve; and he has few, if any peculiarities, of a personal character; no 'mental idiosyncrasies,' as Lord Brougham would say, to indulge, which produce capricious fancies and crotchets. His faculties are always unclouded and unstunted, ever to be depended on; and his judgment secures him success and adherents." The name of Doctor Bunting will ever be associated with Wesleyan Methodism. He has taken such an active part in the deliberations and government of the body; has impressed upon its constitution so much of his own views and policy, and is so universally regarded as the virtual head of the denomination, that his name will be perpetuated for ever in this connection. Against all the world, we are prepared to deny that Dr. Bunting could ever have attained his present position, as a ruler in the Methodist Israel, if there had been any defect in his moral or religious character; or that he could have reached it by any selfish, cunning, aggrandizing policy. The known piety, intelligence, probity, and independence of his brethren, forbid such a supposition. How then has he attained such a position, at once so creditable to his personal, religious, and Methodistical character? Perhaps it may interest the reader to trace, in this connection, the personal history of Dr. Bunting.

The reverend gentleman is of humble parentage, and was born in the county of Derby, in 1780.

Both his parents were members of the Wesleyan Society; they removed to Manchester while our subject was yet a child. In that town he was admitted into the free grammar school, and there attracted the attention of the celebrated Dr. Percival, who employed him as his amanuensis, and at his death showed the respect and confidence he entertained toward him by appointing him one of his executors. At an early age the youth joined the Wesleyan Society, though he was at the time surrounded by Unitarian influences. In 1790, being then about nineteen years of age; he entered the itinerancy under the auspices of the Rev. William Thompson, who presided at the first conference after the death of Mr. Wesley. His first circuit was Oldham; his first superintendent the Rev. John Gaulter. His second circuit was Macclesfield, where he remained two years, as at Oldham. At this juncture he attracted the notice of the Rev. Dr. Coke, and was selected for the missionary work, Dr.

Coke designing him for a mission at Gibraltar. This arrangement, however, fell through, and about the same time he married. From Macclesfield our subject was removed to London, where he labored with much popularity and success for two years; and was then stationed at Manchester. Here he distinguished himself as an advocate for ecclesiastical order in a controversy with some disaffected Methodists known as the "Band-room party." His intimate knowledge and just appreciation of the economy of Wesleyan Methodism, while yet so young, surprised every one, and from that time he continued to grow in favor with the people, while he also secured, in a wonderful degree, the confidence of his brethren. They recognized in him one who had made the Wesleyan economy his familiar study, endowed with peculiar administrative talents, capable of taking enlarged views; fertile in expedients for the most sudden and alarming emergencies; and far sighted in his estimate of the future. Their confidence has never been withdrawn. When he has been most bitterly assailed from without, in the conference he has been cheered with the most cordial expressions of esteem and love.

Four times has he been elected to the presidency of that body, and as each succeeding year rolls round he abundantly justifies their confidence, and astonishes his brethren by his intimate and perfect knowledge of the affairs of the whole connection, and with the unhesitating and almost unerring wisdom that enables him to surmount every difficulty, anticipate every necessity, counteract all opposition, and satisfy every demand.

It would seem that Dr. Bunting was born to rule. He has every qualification for a ruler; always well maturing his plans before he introduces them, and adapting them to the necessities of the time. He is never hasty in legislation. Many of his measures are known to have slept long within his own mind before they were made public; his intimate friends then first perceiving the importance of inquiries seemingly casually addressed to them, or to others in their hearing, and the use to which the interrogator purposed applying the information thus obtained. It is by this constant seeking after knowledge that he has acquired his present influence in the councils of the connection. He has not

been content with barely doing what the rules or usage of the body required of him – preaching his allotted quota of sermons, going the rounds of his circuit, &c. -- but has laid himself out to permanently promote the best interests of Methodism. For this purpose he has taken a comprehensive view of Wesleyan Methodism as the creature of providential circumstances, has kept his eye upon the entire movements of its vast machinery, and familiarized himself with all the details of its operations. The knowledge thus obtained he has turned to account; confidence in that knowledge has thus increased, and this again has operated to the increase of his knowledge; for men finding that he makes it his business to watch over the concerns of the body, to a certain extent commit their interests into his hands: and thus information pours in upon him from every quarter; and however minute the details, not one of them is overlooked or forgotten. All this knowledge he brings to practical account; marks the bearing of facts upon principles, and applies all to the politics of Methodism; making it, in fact, his daily study to adapt its economy to the exigencies, and, as far as lawful, to the spirit of the times. It is a fact but little known, and, by those who have been accustomed to hear this great man railed at as a priestly-dictator, not even suspected, that nearly every measure which has popularized the institutions of Methodism – which has given to the people a more liberal representation – has originated with Dr. Bunting. “Methodism as it is” bears on every lineament the impress of his enlightened and liberal views, while it is immensely indebted to him for its almost perfect system of finance. We believe we give correct information when we say that some seven or eight years ago, when Wesleyan Methodists were exposed to numerous indignities at the hands of certain conceited Puseyite clergymen, the subject of our sketch was prepared, perhaps more than any other Wesleyan minister, to take a bold and open stand against the Established church, or at least to declare separation from it, had not the inhumanity of the clergymen in question received a sufficient and salutary rebuke in the ecclesiastical courts of the land.

Such is our estimate of the Rev. Dr. Bunting; and we believe the estimate is not, in any one of its favorable aspects, in the least degree overdrawn. The world, out of Methodism, does not know him; even some Wesleyans do not understand him; for he has refused to put himself on his defense against the groundless accusations with which he has been pertinaciously assailed. He has been, we had almost said, too indifferent about popularity. That he courted praise of men, or was insincere in his advice and counsel to his brethren, has never been charged upon him. That he has opponents, even in the conference, cannot be denied. It is well that he should have. But that that opposition is composed of more liberal men than himself we are disposed to deny; while we believe that even they will not claim the credit of greater attachment to Methodism, or equal familiarity with its economy.

We could mention acts of Christian kindness and urbanity to his younger brethren in the ministry, and evidences of high-toned integrity in seasons of peculiar trial, which would make his very enemies praise him, but delicacy forbids their introduction here; and we dismiss him with a cordial hope that, though he now stands on the verge of threescore years and ten, he may be spared “yet a little longer,” to preside over the vast interests of the denomination which has long, by general consent, placed him at the head of its most important institutions.

The following “jeu d’esprit” appeared many years ago in Leeds, where Dr. Bunting, with great frequency, exercised his ministry in behalf of the various institutions supported by the Wesleyan Methodist societies

“BEGGING”

Lines written by a Yorkshire man, on hearing the Rev. Jabez Bunting preach at Leeds :

They say as how one Jabez Bunting preach'd
 Better than any man as ever teach'd;
 Now I'ze no Methodist, i' heart or mind,
 I like auld Mother Church too well, ye find;
 She'll let folk go to heaven just as they please,
 But Methodists demand both, hands and knees.
 Howe'er, it matters not my standing grunting,
 I went to'd Boggard-house ^[2] to hear this Bunting.
 I liked his sarmond, ne'er was a completer;
 His text was t' fish's mouth and Simon Peter.
 He talk'd as how i th' Scriptures it wor shown

As all good things we have are not our own;
 Just as he summ'd up all, he said, “My friends,
 The cause before you gloriously tends;
 The work is great, the heathen ask your aid,
 Give freely, and you'll freely be repaid;
 They want the gospel – Britons are its nurses --
 Come forward with your prayers and with your purses;
 O that at last with them we may be found --
 Our friends will please to take the boxes round.”
 Thowt I, it's but a time by chance, I'ze willing
 To gie this honest preacher an odd shilling.

I did so, and went home; I tell'd my wife
I ne'er wor better pleased in all my life.
But then, said I, (and spoke just like an ass,)
These beggings very seldom come to pass;
Happen, when he's not begging for this land,
He talks plain things, just as they come to hand:
They say next Sunday night but one they'll meet --
I'll go and hear him then – in Albion Street.
I went; I liked his sarmond more and more,
And he concluded sooner than before;
Take up his hymn-book, skenn'd it at both ends,
And, to my great amazement, said, "My friends,
You, and the members of this great connection,
Will recollect the quarterly collection."
Thowt I, (and so, I lay, there thowt a many,)
Begging again? I'll gie thee but a penny.
I did so. Musing, went home. I liked the man;
But then I could'nt 'bide this begging plan.
Howe'er, thowt I, I'll try him once again;

They say next month he'll preach in Meadow-lane.
I went wi' some suspicion, that's the truth;
He preach'd that night about religious youth:
Sure wack o' skoels for garnishing he brought,
Where lads were fed, and teach'd, and clothed for
naught.
One skoel ^[3] to great advantage forth he set,
Then said it wor five hundred pounds in debt.
Well done, thowt I, a house can't be varry small,
As hods so many lads, tachers an' all;
Howe'er, wi' that pray what ha' we to do?
He paused a moment, and then let us know, --
"I hope you all your liberal mites will bring;
Our friends will please to gather while we sing."
Nay, Jabez, nay, this money all things mellows:
One o' our kine and ye are just right fellows;
She always gies a rare good meal, does Clover;
But then, like you, she minds to kick it over.

2 JOHN SMITH

"His only righteousness I show,
His saving truth proclaim;
'Tis all my business here below
To cry, 'Behold the Lamb!'
Happy if with my letest breath
I may but gasp his, name;
Preach him to all, and cry in death,
'Behold, behold the Lamb.' "
-- Wesley --

The subject of this sketch was distinguished from his numerous namesakes, both in and out of the British Wesleyan conference, as "John Smith, the revivalist;" and well did he deserve the implied tribute to his zeal and his successful labors. Had he been John Smith only, or even "John Smith, the 3d," as the Minutes of the conference had it, he had probably lived to this day; but the revivalist disdained to measure his labors by his physical strength, and he died at a comparatively early age.

A memoir of him was written by his friend, Rev. Richard Treffry, Jr., and has been republished in this country. It is a book that no man can read without feeling that few of the ambassadors of Christ have done equal honor to their Master, and to the importance of their message, albeit their commission runneth in the same terms. Truly he presented "his body a living sacrifice unto God." John Smith, the revivalist, was a Yorkshireman, a native of Cudworth, a village near Barnsley, in the West-riding of Yorkshire. His father was a local preacher, of considerable popularity in his neighborhood, and deserving of a short notice before his son is more fully introduced. Mr. Smith, Sr., or "Billy Smith," as he was familiarly called, was remarkable rather for his zeal, and the warmth of his piety, than for the extent of his information or the strength of his judgment. In the pulpit and in the prayer meeting he was in his element. He was a man of one sermon – invariably delivering the same discourse, though his texts ranged over numerous passages. They were such as admitted of easy accommodation, as, "Ye must be born again;" "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his;" "Except ye be converted," &c. His preaching, nevertheless, was accompanied with such unction from the Holy One, that it was always acceptable, and seldom without fruit to the praise and glory of God. He was a simple, humble, self-distrusting man; and hence God owned his labors, and, by

what some would call the foolishness of preaching, saved them that believed. The first time that he occupied the pulpit at Barnsley, which was the head of the circuit, he was ensnared by the fear of man; and to avoid embarrassment from his novel situation, he closed his eyes, and did not reopen them until emboldened by having nearly reached the close of his discourse without breaking down, when he discovered, what some of the younger members of the congregation had long been tittering at, that in his agitation he had turned his back upon the audience, and had directed alike his words of comfort and his denunciations against ungodliness to the naked wall to which the pulpit was affixed.

At later periods the writer often heard Mr. Smith preach in the same chapel, and exercise an astonishing influence over the feelings of his hearers by a sermon every word of which was more familiar to them than a "thrice-told tale." Sometimes he would make confession, on this wise, as to the unity of his ministerial teachings: "I wonder, my friends, at your coming to hear such a stick as me. If I could but preach like my son, or Richard Watson, or Dr. Adam Clarke, or any of these great men, [the old man's estimate of his son's intellectual standing would excite a smile,] then I would not wonder at your coming. But you all know well enough that I have but one sermon," &c. Yes; and we all knew "well enough" the entire mechanism of that sermon – literally the "time to laugh, and the time to weep;" for to avoid either was no easy matter, often as we had listened to the old man's discourse. About five minutes were taken up in the introduction; about fifteen in describing "the characters mentioned in the text;" then two or three minutes in dove-tailing the latter part of the sermon to the former, always in these words, and equally uniform in pathos: "And now, my friends, if you were all of this description of people I should have now to do but to tell you to go on, and to conclude. But, alas, you are not, and," &c. Then from seven to ten minutes would be occupied in "describing the character of the unconverted;" and this would be followed by a brief and earnest exhortation, invariably commencing with these words, though he had preached there only the Sunday before, and had ever so thin a congregation – they were, in fact, habitual with him, and were only intended figuratively to express a general truth, though to the hearer they seemed to convey a particular statement -- "Ah my friends, we've had a monny deeaths at Cudworth since I was here last; and I see you've had a monny here too. There's one gone out of that pew, another out of that, [pointing in various directions,] and another out of that; and it'll be your turn next," &c.

Mr. Smith, senior, was a country tailor, "diligently working with his hands, that he might provide things honest in the sight of all men;" doing his share, also, unostentatiously, in ministering to the necessities of such of the household of faith as were poorer than himself. Though a simple man, he had a good deal of latent humor, and was a little impatient of contradiction. Like good old Sammy Hick, he had a "comrade through the wilderness," who was called "Matty." This good woman suffered from a nervous affection for a number of years, and finally became a hypochondriac. Her monomania took the form of a belief that she should die suddenly in the night; and as the malady increased her husband's rest was sadly interrupted by her appeals for help in her (imaginary) death-struggles; though, sooth to say, if report were correct; these appeals were made with a strength of lungs, and an energy, such as do not generally exist on the eve of dissolution. The old man bore this trial for a long time with exemplary patience; but at length the loss of sleep and the excitement threatened seriously to destroy his health, upon which depended their temporal subsistence. He therefore resolved upon a "kill or cure" procedure, having probably satisfied himself that the latter was far more likely to be the result of his maneuver. The next time Matty awoke him with the usual exclamation, "O Billy, I'm dying! I shan't live five minutes!" he simply responded, "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" This astonished the dying woman not a little; but supposing that he had imperfectly heard or misunderstood her, she repeated, with some asperity, "I tell you, I'm dying, Billy: you'll lose me. "Bless the Lord!" said the husband, with something of exultation in his voice; "Bless the Lord: he is going to take her at last! Glory be to his name for his goodness – all this suffering will soon be over – praise the Lord! What a blessed release!" This was too much for the old lady, and the breaking forth of her indignation was perhaps even more of a storm than even her husband cared to admit. "O you cruel man! The years that we've lived together! The wife that I've been to you! And now to praise God that I'm dying! And I a blessed release too! O! Billy --." The remainder of the sentence was lost in a burst of passionate grief. Billy saw that his ruse had told, and was determined to carry it through. "Why, my lass," said he, "thou sees thou hast often wished the Lord would release thee from thy sufferings, and take thee to himself and to glory; but I always wanted thee to stay a bit longer, and that seemed selfishness, and perhaps hindered God from granting thy desire: so I have at last made up my mind to give thee up, and praise God for thy release." Either the shock to Matty's nerves effected a cure, (no uncommon thing in

such cases,) or, on reflection, her good sense triumphed over her morbid craving for sympathy and excitement; she saw that her endeared husband had been taxed beyond his strength, and thereafter the dying hour was devoted to refreshing sleep; her health gradually improved; and the twain lived some years after, jointly walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless; and both, in a ripe old age, passed peacefully through the valley of death to the heavenly Canaan.

But we must leave the company of the father and return to the son. It must ever be a source of deep regret, both for his own, and his companions' sake, that the early life of John Smith was spent in open wickedness. With his impulsive disposition, his natural strength of mind, and force of character, he could not fail to exert a powerful influence, for good or for evil, over all with whom he associated; and as, in his early days, notwithstanding the counsels and example of pious parents, he became the companion of the ungodly, so he had a sad pre-eminence in daring exploits of wickedness. These, however, do not come within the scope of these sketches. He had a strong passion for pugilistic contests, for which his muscular frame and personal courage eminently fitted him, and would travel miles to be present at a prize fight. In all these things his true character appeared; he was open, bold, and fearless, disdaining hypocrisy, and never contenting himself with half measures. Of these distinguishing traits of his character the writer has heard abundant evidence in Mr. Smith's native village; and it was necessary thus briefly to allude to them to enable the reader to form a just view of the triumph of divine grace which will appear in the sequel. God had work for him to do, as he had for Saul of Tarsus, and was not unmindful of the daily supplications of his afflicted parents. In the year 1812, John Smith being then in the nineteenth year of his age, a revival of religion took place at Cudworth, and, while on a visit to his father's house, he came under its gracious influence. At the Sabbath evening meeting the strong man was bowed down, and cried aloud for mercy in the midst of the great congregation. The father was preaching in another part of the circuit, but there were praying men there who knew how to value a human soul, and who knew also that if John Smith were converted, he would be a valiant soldier of the cross. These wrestled with him mightily in prayer; yet the young man returned to his father's house without any mitigation of his distress. But his purpose was fixed; at home he continued wrestling and groaning in the agony of his spirit, and refusing to be comforted, until God, against whom he had sinned, should assure him of pardon. I have more than once heard Mr. Smith, senior, tell, with streaming eyes, of his joy that night, when, returning from his appointment, he found his son John and another of his children wrestling for mercy under his roof. "We thought not of sleep or rest that night, until God spoke peace to my poor prodigal son," said the old man, "and then we were all too happy to sleep." But these reminiscences must be passed over, and Mr. Smith, as an English Wesleyan preacher, must be placed before the reader. It was originally intended that he should enter the mission field, and it was proposed to him that he should supply a vacancy in the Island of Ceylon. To this he heartily agreed, and the consent of his parents was obtained; but on consultation with a medical gentleman, the project was abandoned on account of his health, which had already suffered from intense study and arduous labor. In 1816 he entered upon the itinerant ministry, in the York circuit. At the commencement of his itinerancy he did not give any promise of that remarkable usefulness which subsequently distinguished him, but was endeared to all by the simplicity and frankness of his character, and the earnestness and sincerity of his piety. It was in the year 1828 that the writer of this first heard him preach. He was then in the height of his popularity and usefulness, and in comparative health and vigor. He preached on the morning and evening of the Sabbath day, and held a public prayer meeting in the afternoon. He had, by the way, attended the "band meeting" on the previous evening, and the people had had a foretaste of what they might expect. That Sabbath was a day not to be forgotten in a man's lifetime. I was much impressed with a peculiarity which is noticed by Mr. Treffry in his Memoir – the deep reverence and feeling with which he repeated the Lord's Prayer – in which respect how many ministers of religion would do well to imitate his example, and do equal honor to Him who gave that form to his disciples! Among the English Wesleyans preachers this prayer is invariably repeated at the close of the first prayer in each service, probably thinking that as the Son of God framed the prayer, it is likely to be more comprehensive than any words of mere man's device – that it may possibly embrace something which they have omitted – that it is no more antiquated than the gospel which they labor to promulgate – and that if Christ has not commanded its use, it yet is but due to our all-prevalent Intercessor and High Priest, that as often as possible our supplications should be summed up in the words of the prayer he has bequeathed us. From the lips of Mr. Smith it was not a mere form of prayer – it was prayer itself.

The whole congregation seemed suddenly to have discovered a new meaning in those supplications, and as the preacher's voice trembled with emotion it seemed as though he had laid hold of the divine strength, and was

bringing God down to earth; responses increased in fervor in all directions, and when he came to the closing ascription -- "for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever" -- the people were overwhelmed by the manifestation of the divine presence, and, for several seconds after the "Amen" was pronounced, suppressed murmurings of holy joy lingered on hundreds of lips, while tears of inexpressible delight suffused the eyes of others who felt "The speechless awe which dares not move,

And all the silent heaven of love."

The subject of Mr. Smith's discourse was personal holiness -- entire sanctification of heart. No man could speak more experimentally of this great doctrine, which is universally held by the English Methodist preachers, and is made prominent in their preaching. With our present subject it was a favorite theme, especially in his morning discourses, and was set forth with a clearness of exposition, and an accumulation of experimental and Scriptural evidence, which left without excuse anyone not entered into this perfect rest of the soul. He himself lived in that high frame of spiritual-mindedness, attained but by very few, in which he could employ, with perfect truth, the strong language of the poet, --

"'Tis worse than death my God to love,

And not my God alone."

The reader must not suppose that Mr. Smith, in insisting upon "holiness unto the Lord," indulged in anything like imperiousness or exclusiveness: for though his mind was of a remarkably masculine character, having little flexibility, and either disdained the minor points of an argument, or was incompetent to appreciate or expatiate upon them -- contenting itself with fastening upon conclusions rather than with detailing the process of thought -- the preacher seeming to find his authority in "thus saith the Lord," and demanding a hearing on that rather than on any other ground; yet when he spoke of perfect love and a clean heart he was tender and encouraging in an extraordinary degree, thereby affording the evidence of the doctrines he taught, and giving proof that entire holiness made its possessor "like-minded with Christ;" tender and compassionate in spirit as the Redeemer of souls.

The first part of the sermon consisted principally of textual proof of the doctrine, and was brief, pointed, and unanswerable; then followed a concise statement of the nature and process of "entire sanctification," and the means of its attainment the ground thus cleared, he next showed the necessity and blessedness of such a state of the affections, and encouraged believers to plunge, without doubting, into the fathomless depths of divine love. And now the man began to appear. Passionate remonstrance with the lukewarm, vehement expostulation with the doubting, irresistible encouragement to those who were seeking, and joyous exultation and sympathy with those who had obtained the second deliverance, alternately fell in torrents from his lips; and before he had concluded his discourse a holy flame was kindled through the congregation, the house was filled with the glory of God and, unable longer to control their emotions or restrain the buoyant and expanding love which filled their hearts, one, and another, and another, and others yet again, broke out in shouts of "Glory," and "Hallelujah," until the house rang with the voice of joy and triumph as believer after believer entered into perfect love. It was with the utmost difficulty that the congregation was dismissed. The concluding prayer was offered and the benediction pronounced, yet a few only rose from their knees. Again Mr. Smith engaged in prayer with vehement wrestling; others believed and were baptized "with the Holy Spirit and with fire sent down from heaven." For awhile it seemed as though Christ had taken unto himself his great power, and was about to assert his supremacy in all hearts; and it was only from absolute necessity, both for the preacher's sake and from a due regard to the remaining services of the day, that at length the congregation separated, praising God and making melody in their hearts as they went to their respective homes.

At the prayer meeting, in the afternoon, the chapel was again crowded. Mr. Smith was at his post, engaging prayer some seven or eight times at intervals during the service, each time wrestling with God as though he felt that the salvation of the whole congregation depended upon an immediate answer to his supplications; and between these seasons actively engaged in encouraging those who were seeking for pardon or holiness. If ever man was in "gony of prayer," or wrestled with the energy of Jacob as the breaking day warned him that he must now or never prevail, thus agonized and wrestled Mr. Smith that afternoon. He was a man mighty in prayer, to a degree that has perhaps never been surpassed in modern times. Even his then robust and muscular frame seemed scarcely equal to the earnest, vehement struggles of his soul. Toward the close of the meeting, when penitents were crying aloud in the

disquietude of their souls, and believers, with scarcely less agony, were seeking a deeper baptism of the Holy Spirit, his powerful voice might still be heard above the blended weeping and rejoicing, calling upon God for a larger blessing, “a Pentecostal shower,” pouring out his soul on behalf of the broken hearted, his frame now positively quivering with emotion, and anon his benevolent features beaming with grateful joy as a penitent’s mourning was turned into joy, or a believer received the grace of entire sanctification. The meeting was closed at an advanced hour, barely allowing the preacher time for refreshment before the evening service, while the majority of the people never left the chapel, but continued in prayer and supplication during the brief interval.

The evening service partook of the nature of the preceding ones, and need only be alluded to as developing another phase of Mr. Smith’s preaching – his character as a Boanerges. He must have been a stout-hearted sinner who could withstand his denunciations of the ungodly, or did not quail beneath his representations of the divine wrath against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, and his vindication of the justice of God in the eternal punishment of the finally impenitent. The effect of that evening’s sermon was overpowering; not so much – and the remark applies to his preaching generally – from the employment of strong language, as from the thoroughly masculine and consecutive train of thought with which it was impregnated from the beginning to the end.

The defect of Mr. Smith’s preaching, if defect it could be called, was a paucity of language, a too rigid conciseness of expression, and condensation of thought. His sermons were short, not because they were deficient in matter, but because that matter was compressed into the smallest compass possible; it was the solid gold, rather than the beaten leaf; it made little show, but had great intrinsic value. Such were his views of the lost and perishing condition of the world, and of the responsibilities of the ministerial office – the imperious obligation resting upon the ambassador of Christ to seek only to reconcile men to God – that he lost sight of his reputation as a preacher in the overwhelming desire to be faithful to his ambassadorial trust. It was remarked, by one who knew him well, that “it was from no inability to construct a regular and expanded discourse, according to the taste and practice of the day, that he confined himself to the simple but fervid and impressive style which he adopted. At the commencement of his ministerial career his sermons were more elaborate,” and he was induced to alter his plan from “a conviction that thereby the great end of preaching would be more fully accomplished. The change, therefore, was one of principle; and for the sake of this he was content to forego the reputation of advantages which even the spiritual part of the church are too apt to magnify and deem indispensable, and to acquiesce willingly in being thought destitute of talents which he could not but be conscious were in his power. I know no harder lesson which humility can teach or self-denial submit to learn.”

Let it not be supposed, however, that there was a lack of order or system in Mr. Smith’s sermons; he eschewed all adornment, yet he studied closely and labored assiduously in the preparation of his pulpit discourses, especially in the latter years of his ministry, but his study was to do without what so many teachers study to acquire. Taking success – the conversion of sinners and the building up of believers in their holy faith – as the criterion by which the comparative excellence of the two modes of procedure are to be judged, the verdict must be given in favor of Mr. Smith; and to him the reward will be given at the last day. He was eminently successful in the awakening of those who had been accustomed to sit under the preached gospel for years without emotion. One of this class, in whose salvation Mr. Smith was instrumental, observed that he had long been accustomed to listen to a sermon as he would to a literary essay or a scientific lecture, but that Mr. Smith’s preaching he could not treat thus – it compelled him to reflect – a confession that speaks volumes to every man whom God hath “counted faithful, putting him into the ministry.” The subject of our sketch was as truly a “preacher of righteousness” out of the pulpit as in it. There is in the present day much less free and confiding conversation among professing Christians on the subject of personal experience in religion than in former times. This evil has to an alarming extent crept into class meetings, where it was originally designed that nothing but “experience” should be introduced; instead of which, general statements of religious sentiments, and exhortations to the other members, are now the order of the day, and the leader, learning little or nothing of the present spiritual state of his members, is of necessity compelled to generalize also. They who in the privacy and confidence of a class meeting will not “declare what the Lord hath done for their souls,” are not likely to do so elsewhere, and the evil has thus become general. It was Mr. Smith’s fidelity to this branch of duty that made his intercourse with the members productive of so much good. No man or woman could be long in his company without having the subject brought home, though it was never done offensively, rarely abruptly, and then only when circumstances fully justified it. Almost numberless instances might be given of the good resulting from his faithfulness in this respect. One or two shall be related; many others may be found in Mr. Treffry’s Memoir; but,

until the day when God shall number up his jewels, the half will not be told. He never entered a dwelling – humble cottage or stately mansion – without leaving the savor of this grace behind. The following is strikingly characteristic of the man. When dining at the house of a wealthy member of the society, a lady sat next to him, with whom he entered into conversation, gradually introducing the subject of religion, of which the lady was known to be a professor. She took offense at his inquiries, and resented them with some asperity, and in a manner scarcely becoming her sex or station in society.

Mr. Smith waited till she was silent, then casting upon her a look of inexpressible and compassionate concern, he said, “Madam, you may spit in my face if you please, but you cannot prevent me from loving your soul.” The arrow entered: the words proved to be “as a nail fastened by the Master of assemblies.”

When he visited in his pastoral character, the effects of his intercourse with the people were truly wonderful. Then there needed no circumlocution to reach the object nearest to his heart, but, waiving all other subjects, he would enter at once upon his beloved theme; and having by a few direct inquiries ascertained the spiritual state of each member of the family, never forgetting those so often overlooked in pastoral visitations, the domestics, Anglice [Anglice means: “in English” -- DVM], servants, he would know no peace until in answer to prayer they each became assured of a personal interest in Christ, and all were made

“Partners of like precious faith.”

Others again, in their distress of mind, would visit him at his own house; and he was always “at home” to these, taking them into his study, counseling them, and praying with them until God “set their souls at liberty

By his victorious love.”

Constant communion with God was at the foundation of Mr. Smith’s great usefulness. In this he was surpassed by none of any age. Whole nights were often given up to prayer, and always, when in anything like moderate health – often too when wasted by painful disease – he arose at four o’clock in the morning, and throwing himself before the mercy-seat, for three hours wrestled with God in mighty prayer. The writer has heard, from persons in whose houses he has been temporarily residing, that in the coldest winter morning they have heard him at that hour with suppressed voice pleading with God, while his groans have revealed the intensity of his feelings. Immediately after breakfast and family worship, he would again return with his Bible into his study, and spend until near noon in the same hallowed employment. Here unquestionably was the great secret of his power in public prayer and in preaching – the Lord, who seeth in secret, rewarding him openly. Every sermon was thus sanctified by prayer. On one occasion, when at a country appointment, the time for commencing the service had elapsed, and Mr. Smith did not make his appearance. He had left the house where he was a guest, about half an hour before, after being some time in his closet. At length he was found in an adjoining barn wrestling in prayer for a blessing upon the approaching service; having retired thither that unobserved he might pour out his full soul before his heavenly Father. He arose, briefly expressed his regret at not having observed the lapse of time, and on the way to the chapel relapsed into silent prayer.

During the sermon that evening the fervent prayer of the righteous man proved effectual. The Spirit of God descended upon the congregation; the deep attentive silence observed at the commencement of the discourse was soon interrupted by sobs and moans, and these ere long were followed by loud and piercing cries for mercy, as, one after another, the hearers were pricked to the heart, and the strongholds of Satan were beaten down, until, so universal was the cry of the brokenhearted, that Mr. Smith found it necessary to desist from preaching and descend into the altar. As he had continued his discourse for some time after its remarkable effects first showed themselves, there was considerable confusion for want of a leading and controlling spirit, and the disorder was rapidly increasing; but when he descended from the pulpit and took charge of the meeting, his admirable plans and great influence, aided by a voice almost equal to the roar of thunder, soon wrought a change, and in perfect order, though not in silence, the meeting, was continued until midnight.

Whatever apparent confusion there might be in these meetings, they were, actually, conducted systematically. Mr. Smith had his method amid all the surrounding excitement, and he never delegated the control to another, but was the last to retire from the scene of the Redeemer’s triumphs.

An anecdote was related in the hearing of the writer by Rev. James Methley, and is also mentioned by Mr. Treffry,

which annihilated in the minds of all who heard it whatever feelings were entertained adverse to the course adopted by this holy man. While he was stationed in the Windsor circuit, he was attending an anniversary at Canterbury, where his friend and school-fellow, Mr. Methley, was stationed. At this time Mr. Smith's labors were almost super-human, and his constitution was manifestly giving way under them. It was resolved by his brethren, that he should be affectionately remonstrated with, and Mr. Methley was deputed to introduce the subject. At the supper table a favorable opportunity presented itself, and Mr. Methley opened the matter to him. The friendship between them was strong and ardent; they were both men of noble, generous natures. Mr. Smith laid down his knife and fork, and listened to his friend with affectionate respect; then, bursting into tears, he replied, "I know it all. I ought to put a restraint upon myself. But what can I do? God has given me such a view of the perishing condition of sinners that I can only find relief in the way I do – in entreating them to come to Christ, and wrestling with God to save them. And then, his feelings overcoming him, he paused a few moments, and added, "Look around you, my dear friend and brother; do you not see sinners perishing on every hand, and must they not be saved? O do not seek to turn me from my purpose; for while I thus see and feel, I am compelled to act as I do." All were silenced, and all were melted into tears; -- Mr. Methley being so overcome that he was compelled abruptly to leave the room. "Never," said Mr. M., his eyes filling with tears at the recollection; "never shall I forget that evening. Often was I applied to afterward, as known to be his friend, to use my influence to arrest his self-sacrifice; but I could not do it; my mouth was closed; I dared not say a word; the expression of his countenance that evening remains with me to this day." Mr. Smith's personal appearance is not easily described. To the last, though mixing with the best society, he retained much of his rustic appearance. His countenance was oval, very slightly elongated. The features were firmly set, rarely changing except under strong emotion; yet the expression of his countenance underwent frequent and rapid variations, and these variations baffle description. Sometimes the ruling sentiment – as joy, grief, pity, sympathy – would seem to be diffused over the surface of the countenance, irradiating the whole face; and again it would linger about the lips and eyes only. The general expression, or the repose, was a union of guilelessness, benevolence, and decision. The hair was brown: whiskers inclining to sandy, and trimmed close. His height was about five feet ten or eleven inches; his frame firmly knit, and muscular, and manifestly capable, with ordinary prudence, of severe and long-continued labor, though the neck was a little too long, and the shoulders rather narrow. Judging by the Scripture rule of reward hereafter to those who have turned many to righteousness, his glorified body will shine with unwonted luster in the city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

5 ROBERT NEWTON

"He has no party rage, no sectary's whim:
Christian and countryman is all with him."

-- Crabbe --

"All men love to lean on him, who never failed nor fainted. Freedom gloweth in his eyes, and nobleness of nature at his heart."

-- Proverbial Philosophy --

Some twelve years ago the writer was traveling between Manchester and Leeds by that most pleasant of all conveyances, an English first-class stage coach, (now, by the introduction of railroads, an almost unknown mode of transportation,) preferring, as every experienced traveler in good health would, an "outside place." The seats in the rear were occupied by a very pleasant company, veritable sons of John Bull – so often denounced as a surly, unsociable fellow, who never opens his lips but to snarl and growl; yet they soon entered into agreeable conversation, though to that moment they were entire strangers to each other. Even the "guard" -- an official attached to every stage coach on a long route, and to all first-rate coaches, be the run ever so short; and who is generally something of a sporting character – joined in the conversation with considerable readiness and propriety.

Religious topics became the subject of converse; and as there was at least one Methodist in the company, it will excite no wonder that Methodism put in its claim to notice. When we had descended from principles to communities, there was no difficulty in stepping down from communities to individuals, and the talents and characteristics of various ministers and laymen, more or less known to the religious world, were reviewed. In reply

to a remark from one of the party, the guard said, in substance: --

“I do not profess religion myself,” (adding the common excuse, that his line of life was unfavorable to its possession;) “but I love to see it in others when they live up to it. There is a gentleman who travels a good deal, who when he comes out of Leeds or Manchester generally travels by my coach; ^[5] and he always takes a seat behind, with me. We never get far from the pavements before he contrives to turn the conversation to religion. I don’t know how he manages it: it seems to come up naturally, and before you know what he is driving at. Nobody takes offense; for he is as true a gentleman as ever sat on a coach. He often talks to me very plainly; and sometimes asks me very close questions, but in such a friendly manner that I cannot help answering them. I love that man, and so does everybody. I’ve known gentlemen, when they have heard him talking, leave the front seats, when we stopped anywhere, and come and sit here, that they might listen to him. He does not make any parade of his religion either; but no one can help seeing that he is a good man, and that his religion makes him cheerful and happy. I often wish I was like him. I think his name is Isaac Newton.”

Smiling at the guard’s mistake, while I admired his manly honesty, I observed, “Robert Newton, is it not?”

“Yes, I believe it is,” said he: “he is always traveling about.” The writer had known and admired Mr. Newton before he heard this disinterested and incidental testimony to his noble consistency of character. From that hour who could help esteeming and loving him?

Cecil observes, that “the history of a man’s own life is, to himself, the most interesting history in the world, next to that of the Scriptures. Every man is an original and solitary character. None can either understand or feel the book of his own life like himself. The lives of other men are to him dry and vapid when set beside his own.” In an inferior sense to that which Cecil intended, the remarks apply with peculiar force to Mr. Newton. If he keeps a diary or journal, (which, however, is doubted,) a record of apostolical labors has yet to be given to the world unparalleled, it may safely be said, in the modern history of the church, and not surpassed in extent by the “journeyings often” of the Rev.

John Wesley himself.

Mr. Newton entered upon the itinerancy in 1799; the same year in which Dr. Bunting and some other eminent preachers commenced their public ministry. There was that year an unusual scarcity of candidates; and it is commonly said that Mr. Newton was called out without the usual preliminaries and course of examination. He soon, however, gave evidence that he was in every way qualified for the high vocation, and that the conference had but opened the path in which the great Head of the church designed he should walk. It is not generally known under whose ministry Mr.

Newton was awakened. Mrs. Taft, a female preacher, at one time of some celebrity, was wont to claim him as her son in the gospel. The claim, however, was not just; since the good woman confounded the subject of this sketch with his brother Jacob, who after laboring a few years in the itinerancy, with much acceptance, retired on account of ill health, and entered into business. He found peace in a prayer meeting, after preaching by Mrs. Taft, who to the last persisted in her claim upon Robert; and in her pious and well-meant zeal used often to wrestle mightily with God that he would give her another Robert Newton, as a seal to her labors. It is said that on account of the pertinacity and publicity with which the lady claimed her instrumentality in his conversion, Mr.

Newton’s brethren in the ministry have been known to quiz him a little upon the subject; but he uniformly refuses to acknowledge any woman as his spiritual father.

Remembering that the gentleman has visited this country, it seems almost needless to describe his personal appearance. Hundreds, however, did not see him; and to them the description will be welcome. His features are masculinely handsome; his face bears the impress of hardiness and health, embrowned by constant exposure. The whiskers cross far over the cheek, are trimmed with some exactness, and are forbidden to grow on the lower part of the face beyond a straight line drawn from the bottom of the ear to a little above the upper lip. They give rather a martial air to the countenance, which is increased by the upright attitude of their owner. The nose is slightly aquiline. The mouth, as Mr. Everett observes, is formed for public speaking, and is capable of emitting, without the least contraction, the fullest voice. The hair is naturally dark; but he wears a false top, which, before the whiskers became gray, could scarcely be recognized as an artificial covering: even now it has a natural appearance. The

forehead is very fine, sufficiently high, expansive, and beaming with light.

Ingenuousness, blended suavity and dignity, are strongly and truthfully indicated by the whole features. The eyes, dark and expressive, and remarkable for the clearness of the white, are overhung with long black lashes, and surmounted with a finely-arched eyebrow. In height he is not far from six feet. There is a slight degree of squareness about the shoulders; and the whole frame is sinewy, strong and compact, fitly joined together, and capable of enduring almost any amount of labor. His voice must be heard to be appreciated. Deep-toned and melodious, it is equal to any demands that can be made upon it. It has all the compass and power of the organ: now swelling and pealing, and anon softening into deepest tenderness and sweetness, yet in its faintest sounds always audible in every part of the largest building. The perfection of his voice is well seconded by the grace, ease, and unvarying propriety of his action. Mr. Newton is little indebted to art in any respect – nature made him an orator: he has sought little instruction elsewhere, and acknowledges no other teacher. His pulpit gestures are never violent: his favorite action is a slight forward inflection of the body, and a circular motion of the right hand, with the palm downward, over the open Bible. Sometimes he points at the page before him with the forefinger, or stretches out the arm; or lays his hand upon his breast, (the left hand or arm is never used alone,) or elevates both hands, with the eyes raised to the ceiling; and these actions, with an occasional tapping upon the Bible with the forefinger and thumb united at the extremities, though often repeated, are so perfectly in accordance with the subject under treatment, that they never weary or lose their manifest appropriateness.

An illustration of his power as an orator occurs to the writer. A friend of mine, disentangled from the meshes of infidelity, took a former associate, an intelligent man, but an avowed infidel, to hear Mr. Newton at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. At the close of the service, on the homeward walk, the infidel was asked his opinion of the preacher.

“O,” said the young man, he is a perfect orator; a natural orator too. But he is a fool, sir.” My friend was annoyed at the remark, and was about resenting it somewhat sharply, when the young man continued: --

“Pardon me; I do not mean the remark offensively, but that he is neglecting his own interest. If Mr.

Newton would go upon the stage, sir, instead of yielding to his religious enthusiasm, he might, with his voice, gesture, and commanding figure, gain his thousands a year, with only a tithe of the toil and inconveniences which he must, in his present position, undergo.” Such was the tribute awarded to the extraordinary gifts of our present subject, by one who could not be regarded as a partial witness; -- and, alas such the characteristic estimate put upon the noblest of human faculties by heartless infidelity; such the melancholy ignorance of that impelling principle of love for souls, that “yearning pity for mankind,” which led the Saviour to Calvary, and still prompts his ministers and servants to count everything but loss, if so they may “snatch poor souls out of the fire,

And quench the brands in Jesus’ blood.”

It is somewhat difficult to fix Mr. Newton’s rank as a preacher, apart from his distinction as an orator. The hearer is led away from criticizing the matter of his discourses by the irresistible charm of his manner. Some, not carefully analyzing their emotions while listening to the voice of the charmer sincerely believe that the theology is as profound as the oratory is perfect; while others, with equal sincerity and earnestness, say that it is the oratory alone which makes the preacher so universally popular. Perhaps both opinions are erroneous; the latter being formed without due regard to Mr. Newton’s deprivation of those facilities for study which are ordinarily the privilege of ministers. From the first year of his itinerancy, and especially for the last forty years, he has paid the usual penalty of great popularity, and has had little time that he could call his own. Probably four-fifths of his time are spent from home, in traveling, preaching, and speechmaking. He has thus been excluded from his study, denied the privilege of retirement and seclusion, and has been thrown, almost without intermission, into promiscuous society. Add to these, the burden of correspondence which his position necessarily lays upon him, and it cannot but be regarded as evidence of a strong intellect and great aptitude for the investigation and elucidation of theological truth, that he has been able to meet the incessant calls upon his ministerial labors, not only without disappointment on the part of his hearers, but with continued and increasing acceptability. No Wesleyan minister states with greater precision the doctrines held by the body; or more clearly teaches obvious Christian duties and privileges; or more faithfully rebukes the sinner and the hypocrite; or more tenderly invites the trembling penitent to trust in the mercy of God; or more cheerily points the believer to the great end and reward of his faith, even everlasting life.

Mr. Newton’s sermons would always command attention, and be profitable to the hearer, even in the absence of the

charm of his oratory. His rigid simplicity of diction, the clearness, fullness, and force, of his expositions, would make him an acceptable preacher under any circumstances. His sermons do not give evidence of towering intellect, of profound research, or of brilliant imagination; but neither are they deficient in clearness, force, or completeness; they have always a definite purpose which they are well adapted to accomplish. His topics and thoughts are good without being novel; useful, though they may not dazzle; and he invariably finds his way both to the heads and the hearts of his hearers. His principal defect is, that he is sometimes too discursive, and takes a wider range than the text, to a closer thinker, would seem to justify. A rather amusing instance of this may be here narrated.

Mr. Newton, and an intimate friend of the writer, Rev. Mr. _____, were appointed to preach missionary sermons on Christmas day, at Pontefract, in Yorkshire. Mr. _____ was at the time stationed in one of the Leeds circuits, and it was arranged that the writer should drive him over to Pontefract, on the morning of the day on which his services were required, Mr. Newton preaching in the morning and evening, and he in the afternoon. As we passed along the road the exercises of the day were canvassed; and at the writer's solicitation, Mr. _____ consented to reproduce a sermon which had been attended at Leeds with special benefit, the text being, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," &c. We arrived too late at our destination to see Mr. Newton before he entered the pulpit. When he announced his hymn, Mr. _____ quietly remarked, "He will take my text." The conjecture proved correct; and, before the close of the discourse, Mr. Newton had, to his colleague's discomfiture, touched upon almost every branch of theology which had the most remote bearing upon the subject or the season. Mr. Newton, in the vestry, after preaching, excused himself from the afternoon service, on the ground that he had traveled most of the night, and had to "pass on" after evening preaching. The sequel, however, was not yet. In the afternoon, Mr. _____ occupied the pulpit, in the full confidence that his associate would not be present. He had scarcely announced as his text, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things" -- before the majestic form of the morning preacher was observed in the body of the chapel. Again we all met in the vestry. "Why, _____," said Mr. Newton, "you have stolen a march upon me. I was going to preach from that text tonight." "Just serves you right," was the reply; "you took my text this morning, and robbed me of two or three sermons into the bargain." Of course there was some merriment at the reverend gentlemen's expense.

The amount of physical labor which Mr. Newton undergoes is almost incredible. It is calculated that he travels from eight to ten thousand miles every year. Indeed, as Mr. Everett observes, he can scarcely be said to have a home to which he can assert a residential claim, except the highway and the house of God, the stagecoach or the railway carriage, and the pulpit, in one or other of which he is to be found, with few intervals, from Sunday morning to Saturday night." He makes a point, as far as practicable, of being in his own circuit on the Sunday; and when he is at home, if it should happen to be his "country Sunday," the most distant and insignificant place is as punctually and cheerfully attended to, as the largest of the town chapels. This is so well understood, that when the plan ^[6] shows that it is his Sunday "out," or in the country part of the circuit, the members of the place where he is planned depute some person, going to market on the Saturday, to ascertain whether Mr. Newton is at home; and if an affirmative answer be received, great is their joy. The instructions to this deputy are generally accompanied by an injunction to make the inquiry the last thing before he leaves town, because it is known that the latest conveyance is the most likely to bring the preacher. Sometimes the messenger is not a member of the society, and feels no interest in the matter beyond a willingness to oblige his neighbors; or, perhaps, afflicted with the malady of bashfulness, he merely rings at Newton's door, asks whether he is at home, and receiving a reply in the negative, turns away without inquiring further, and reports accordingly. The intelligence throws a damper upon rustic expectation, and the people are but ill prepared to receive the "young man" whose misfortune it is to be appointed by the conference as Mr. Newton's "assistant" -- meaning substitute. Some of the older ones know, however, that "while there is time there is hope," and, congregating about the chapel door before the hour for service, they cast anxious glances along the turnpike which leads from the circuit town. Watches of ancient mechanism, and inordinate thickness and circumference, are drawn from capacious fobs, and from their varying indices sage conclusions are arrived at, as to whether it is yet half-past ten o'clock, or still lacks five minutes. By common consent the five minutes are allowed; for "who shall decide when watches disagree?" And while yet all faces are turned in the direction of the road leading to the circuit town, the rumbling of wheels in the opposite direction suddenly ceases, and springing from a borrowed gig, or shander-a-dan, or other nondescript vehicle, Mr. Newton gently lays his hand upon the shoulder of one of the group, and in his well-known voice quietly risks, if it is not "preaching time." A hearty and universal shaking of hands follows; with buoyant step the preacher passes through the chapel yard into the house of God; a

few linger until he has disappeared, and then hastily step into the neighboring houses to spread the intelligence of Mr. Newton's arrival; and in ten minutes the crowded building attests the preacher's popularity. The probable truth is that on Saturday night, at a distance of fifty or sixty miles from home, his travel has been interrupted by the contingency, not uncommon as railroads began to intersect the country, that a night coach on which he had relied had, without notice, been taken off the road, and he thus has been unexpectedly thrown upon his own resources. These seldom fail him.

He has friends everywhere, and knows almost every road, crossroad, and by-lane in the country. By a rapid process he "calculates" where he can be sure of a vehicle; and by dint of traveling all night, perhaps by some circuitous route, he secures his object, and is at the chapel door punctually at the time for service. He will preach that day two or three times, probably snatching twenty minutes sleep in the intervals after evening preaching he will ride home, a distance perhaps of six or eight miles, and on Monday evening be preaching forty, fifty, or a hundred miles in another direction.

This kind and degree of labor Mr. Newton has performed incessantly for nearly half a century – exposed to all kinds of weather, and, what to most constitutions is even more injurious, to constant irregularity in the matters of sleep and food – and yet he comes out of each journey, and appears in the pulpit, "with a frame as firmly braced as a drum, with a countenance as open as the day, and spirits as joyous as those of the lark when the streaks of the morning begin to break over the earth," and has, with the exception of two brief intervals, enjoyed uninterrupted health.

Of his ingenuity in extricating himself from the mishaps and exigencies of such constant traveling, numerous instances might be recorded. A few must suffice. In some of these Mr. Everett has the priority of publication in the Wesleyan Centenary Takings, but they were matters of common conversation in Wesleyan circles before he gave them to the world in notes to his masterly portrait of Mr. Newton.

Skillful as is the subject of this sketch in extricating himself from dilemmas caused by accidents of the road, he was once so fairly "cornered," that, in spite of all his experience and skill, he was driven to the necessity of either disappointing his congregation, or walking ten miles after leaving the coach, burdened with his traveling dress and carpet-bag, and straitened also for time. He made his choice without hesitation, arrived at the place, immediately ascended the pulpit, and went through the service without apparent fatigue.

At another time, the coach by which he expected to travel to the next town failed to arrive, and the hour for preaching was drawing very near. Not a vehicle or even a horse could he obtain. While rather anxiously pondering over the difficulty, the postman approached on his way to the place which Mr. Newton wished to reach. The perplexed traveler hailed him, and explained his difficulty. The postman knew him, and instantly dismounted; the preacher as suddenly was metamorphosed into the postman, and, "intrusted with the whole epistolary affairs of church and state, of the commercial and social world, the new equestrian clapped his heels to the horse – off he went in fine style – the horn and pistols in their proper places – the bags flapping against the old stager's sides, and beating time to his pace – and the postman trudging it on foot in the rear. Both horse and rider knew the way to the office – they dashed through the streets of W_____, and were so at the door, where the new postman made an honest surrender of the letters and the horse, to the no small amusement of the postmaster and his family, who happened to be Wesleyans." On another occasion, when about eleven miles from his destination, the gig in which he was traveling broke down, and was so much shattered that the united skill of the occupants could not avail to "fix" it, even for temporary use; nor was there any blacksmith's or wheelwright's shop within sight. The case was urgent, and Mr. Newton's decision prompt. Disentangling the horse, and stripping it of the harness, except the bridle, and cutting a good "switch" from the hawthorn hedge, he mounted the bare back of the astonished steed, and telling his companion where it would be found at the place of destination, he was soon on his way, with his carpet-bag before him, and his cloak floating behind, many an astonished swain wondering at the modern John Gilpin.

Speaking of his cloak reminds me that the first time I saw Mr. Newton was some five and twenty years ago, at a small country town in the North-riding of Yorkshire, not far distant from Mr.

Newton's birthplace, Robin Hood's Bay. On a certain day in the year, and almost at the same hour in the day, he might be seen en route to his native place, to preach the anniversary sermons on behalf of the chapel, riding at a gentle, jogging pace, technically known as a "Methodist preacher's trot," and with an oil-skin covering over his hat,

and his person enveloped in an old green tartan-plaid cloak. It must even then have done long service, for the original green had passed through the “sere and yellow” into a nondescript hue unknown in the nomenclature of colors. Moreover it had acquired the sobriquet [nickname – DVM] of “Mr. Newton’s cloak,” and was so well known that it was often the means of recognition when on a crowded coach his face could not be seen. “That’s Mr. Newton’s cloak,” exclaimed one of the family, running to the window. The writer followed, and, as Mr.

Newton, catching a glimpse of my sister’s figure turned round to give the sign of recognition, received the first and indelible impression of his noble features. I saw the same cloak on the same form three hundred miles in another direction, some six or seven years afterward; since when I do not remember to have observed it. Probably it did wear out in the lapse of years.

Before dismissing the perils by land, to which the subject of this sketch is often exposed, an instance in which he narrowly escaped peril of another sort may be mentioned. He was sojourning for a night in the house of a wealthy member of the society, and had to proceed on his journey long before daylight. His host, knowing this, gave orders that his guest and himself should be called early; and that breakfast should be prepared in time for him to accompany Mr. Newton to the coach. When the guest retired, his kind host assured him that he might rely upon the arrangements that were made, and pressed him to resign himself to sleep without anxiety. Though impressed with the generous consideration of his host, Mr. Newton yet preferring to trust to his own habits, awoke at the required time, sallied from his chamber, and finding that no one was stirring but himself, stepped quietly down stairs, unfastened the front door, and closed it softly after him, that he might not disturb the family. On reaching the iron gates he found them securely locked. If he had been so disposed, there was not time to arouse the inmates of the house, and obtain the key, before the coach would start.

Suspending his carpet-bag on one of the iron rails, so that he could unhook it at the other side, he, with great difficulty, scaled the palisades. Unseen by the adventurous climber, a policeman was mean time watching his movements, which were certainly rendered suspicious by the absence of any lights in the house, the quiet observed, the carpet-bag, and the scaling of the rails. Reaching the sidewalk in safety, Mr. Newton unhooked the carpet-bag and hastily moved on. The policeman followed, never for a moment losing sight of his prey, resolved to see where the supposed burglar deposited his booty. Just as the traveler arrived at the coach, and the man in authority was about to arrest him as his prisoner, some one accosted him, -- “O, Mr. Newton, are you going by this coach?” The policeman retired, both amused and disappointed. The name was familiar to him; it had been placarded in almost every village and town in the kingdom, and was a passport for integrity.

The features in Mr. Newton’s history and character which awaken the devout joy of his friends, are his sterling piety and unaffected humility, notwithstanding the continual temptation to exhibit another spirit. His piety is manly and ennobling, and is as much unlike the sickly sentimentalism of some religious professors, who have acquired the dialect of the gospel without imbibing its spirit, as light is unlike darkness. It is healthy, vigorous, and catholic, caring more for “truth in the inward parts” than for mere externals; carping never at the shape of a man’s garments, nor anathematizing those who may differ from him as to what is fitting and comely in apparel. No man would more sincerely grieve over the slave to fashion of either sex – the pride of conformity to the world, and the pride of nonconformity, would alike awaken his compassion, and insure his exhortation and prayers for the subject of it – but it is very doubtful whether any man ever heard a censorious remark upon an absent person from his lips. His piety is too deeply imbued with the charity and magnanimity of the gospel. Tell him of a fellow-disciple’s dereliction from duty, too notorious to be doubted and too palpably a breach of principle to be apologized for, and his response will be, in effect, -- “Yes, my heart bleeds for him; let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” Let it not be supposed, however, that his piety is not also practical. It is strikingly so. It regulates his whole unblemished character. It lies at the foundation of his uniform cheerfulness. It is the mainspring of his incessant labors and privations, and has preserved him from pride and self-conceit during half a century of unparalleled popularity.

Until the second advent of the Redeemer, when every man “shall stand in his lot,” the fruits of Mr.

Newton’s ministry cannot be computed. But when the great Head of the church shall appear in the heavens, and his “reward with him, to give unto every man according as his work shall be,” the subject of this sketch will be invested with immortal honor, and the crown of his rejoicing will be studded with many gems of purest luster. Many are the redeemed of the Lord who have been gathered into the fold of the church through his instrumentality. He who called

him to labor in his vineyard has honored his servant's fidelity by giving him seals to his ministry. I will here name one remarkable instance, the particulars of which have not before been published. They were made known to me by a member of the family whose maternal head occupies so honorable a position in the narrative.

Mr. Newton was in the habit of annually preaching the sermons on behalf of the principal chapel in Derby. At the time to which reference is now made, Rev. Isaac Turton was stationed there. His lady, a model for a preacher's wife, eminently mindful of her own household, while she forgot not the necessities, both temporal and spiritual, of those around her, and whose praise is in all the churches to this day, had been very solicitous for the conversion of a bold and intelligent infidel, who, by his public addresses and other means, was leading many into the dark and tortuous paths of skepticism. Mrs. Turton was a faithful and efficient tract distributor, and this infidel's house was in her district. Unweariedly, and in spite of harsh words, for nine successive weeks, she persevered in calling with her little messenger of peace, and as often did he refuse to admit it into the house, watching regularly for Mrs. Turton's visit, lest his wife, or some other member of the family, should be touched by the meek earnestness of the lady, and be persuaded to accept the tract. At the tenth visit his resolution gave way. He permitted the tract to be left, but persisted in declining to read it, or allow it to be read. The third or fourth, however, which was thus left, was returned with a page turned down – a consultation was held between the pious lady and her husband, and two or three suitable books were sent by Mr. Turton to the now half-awakened infidel. In a few days he voluntarily returned the visit which was at first so distasteful to him; conversation and prayer followed; and at Mrs. Turton's earnest solicitation he consented to attend at the Wesleyan Chapel on the following Sunday, when Mr. Newton was to preach the anniversary sermons.

This infidel was a well-known character, of good moral reputation, bold and fearless in the avowal of his sentiments, of considerable respectability, and possessed a very large, and, in a pecuniary sense, very valuable library. In person, he was of commanding aspect. That there was, in spite of his infidelity, a redeeming manliness of character about him will be inferred from his reply to Mrs.

Turton's offer of a seat in the preachers' pew, as being in a retired situation where he would be less observed by the congregation. "No, madam," he said; "you have already been instrumental in changing my views of religion to some extent. I begin to doubt the soundness of my cherished sentiments, the promulgation of which I have openly labored for, and if I attend your chapel on Sunday, it shall be in sight of the whole congregation." Sunday came, and, true to his promise, the relenting skeptic entered the chapel, and took a seat in the center of the body of the house. All eyes were immediately turned upon him, and significant glances were exchanged between those in the congregation to whom he was known. But to this observation the observed was indifferent; he was lost in meditation. Mr. Newton ascended the pulpit, and announced the hymn. The new hearer awoke from his reverie, fixed his eyes upon the preacher with an expression of deep interest, stood erect while the hymn was sung, and kneeled devoutly during prayer. Mr. Newton, who was entirely ignorant of the circumstances in which he was placed, took for his text Psalm i, 1: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." The effect upon the man was electrical; and before the preacher had well entered upon his sermon he was leaning upon the front of the pew, with his eyes intently fixed upon the speaker, eagerly drinking in every word that came from his lips, utterly unmindful of the amazement of some in the congregation, to whom his character and person were well known. He also attracted Mr. Newton's notice, who, though feeling an impression that the man was arrested by the word, yet was puzzled by the fixed and almost rigid expression of his countenance, and stepping into Mr. Turton's house after preaching, made inquiries respecting his hearer. While they were conversing, the doorbell rang, and the man himself was introduced into the room. His first remark, a not unusual one, was, that Mrs. Turton had told the preacher his history; this being denied, and the matter explained to him, he turned toward Mr. Newton, acknowledged that God had spoken through him to his erring heart, and besought the prayers of all three for his full deliverance from the snare of the enemy. An hour was spent in earnest prayer and supplication, Mr. Turton's study echoing with the groans and cries of the wounded sinner and the impassioned tones of the subject of this sketch and those who were associated with him. The penitent, though he did not then obtain a clear knowledge of sins forgiven, was encouraged to hope: he went home; the next morning he made a bonfire of his large collection of infidel books, became subsequently truly converted, and an acceptable local preacher in the Methodist connection.

Any sketch of Mr. Newton would be very imperfect which did not take some notice of his platform services; for, in

the abundance and efficiency of his labors in that department of Christian enterprise, he is certainly without a parallel. No missionary meeting ever proved a failure at which he was present as a speaker. They manage these meetings better in England, the writer conceives, than we do here; and, indeed, their whole missionary organization is more effective. The noble sum annually placed at the disposal of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, as compared with the income of the Methodist Episcopal Missionary Society, is evidence of this. Great pains are taken to infuse interest into the English missionary anniversaries, and to make them occasions of high intellectual and spiritual enjoyment. Their meetings are always preceded by missionary sermons, for which a stranger is secured, if only from a neighboring circuit. The meeting is held during the week following, but never on the Sunday. Such a thing would not be thought of among the Wesleyans in England. The meeting is generally presided over by a layman, and both clergy and laity take part in the speaking.

In the towns the platform is large, and is occupied by a numerous representation of Methodist ministers, and generally some of the other denominations, and of the influential laity connected with the chapel or town in which the meeting is held.

In Manchester, Leeds, and other large towns, twenty, thirty, or even more, occupy the platform.

Four or half a dozen speakers will address the meeting, each proposing or “supporting,” as it is technically styled, one of a series of resolutions previously prepared by the local secretary. Each resolution is formally put to the meeting by the chairman, and a vote taken upon it by a show of hands. The meeting usually continues from halfpast six or seven o’clock until ten in the evening, more or less protracted by local circumstances. The collection is made, in the ordinary mode of handing round the boxes, when the meeting is about three-fourths advanced. If Mr. Newton is one of the speakers, he, of course, makes, what is pleasantly called, the “collection speech,” and no man can make it so effectively. Yet it can scarcely be said that he begs – a hundred persons might be found who would do that more importunately and mercilessly. He will dwell in glowing terms upon the blessedness of those who co-operate with the providence and grace of God in the missionary enterprise; he will depict, in tones of deepest tenderness, the wretchedness and misery of the heathen; he will stimulate and encourage the audience to liberality by a vivid picture of what has been achieved by missionary labor; and expatiate, in words that burn, upon the opening prospects and expanding glories which everywhere invitingly meet the eye of the Christian philanthropist. By these, and other avenues, he will enter the very citadel of the heart of those whom he addresses, and, kindling there the fire of pure Christian sympathy and love, will fan it into a flame by the recital of remarkable instances of unselfish devotion to the great and holy work of converting a rebel world, so many of which have come within his personal knowledge; and all this he will do with such felicity of expression, and such a gush of hallowed feeling, as to make his more direct appeals irresistible.

Toward the close of his speech, persons unused to the giving mood often become impatient for the opportunity of aiding the cause, the advocate of which has awakened such new and delightful emotions within their breasts, and has clothed the smallest voluntary sacrifice in the cause of missions with an acceptability in the sight of God, and an importance in its consequences to their fellow-men, which prompt them to the noblest efforts, and make “their duty their delight.” It is by supplying motives for liberality, and by depicting its rewards, that Mr. Newton so invariably succeeds. There is nothing of dictation in his address – no saying what they must give – no undignified solicitation; the people give spontaneously as the Lord hath prospered them, or as the silent monitor within may counsel them; they retire to their homes with the pleasant conviction that, of their own accord, they have done what they could; the hallowed joy and the inward satisfaction, felt at the meeting, remain with them; and when the time returns for the repetition of the anniversary, it is anticipated with a delight which rests securely upon the happy experience of the former meeting.

It is for higher authorities than the writer to decide whether this is not, in the long run, a more productive plan than that which now, to so great an extent, prevails at the anniversaries of our own Missionary Society. For a number of years Mr. Newton has been annually elected, by an almost unanimous vote, secretary of the Conference, with the exception only of the years in which he was, with the same near approach to unanimity, elected president. He is not a man likely to allow such a body for a moment to transgress the rules of order, even were such a disposition manifested. It is but justice, however, to the British Conference to say, that an appeal to the presiding officer on a point of order is a very rare occurrence. They are ever willing to exercise Christian courtesy even in the utmost freedom and animation of debate.

As will be inferred from what has already been said, he is peculiarly adapted either for secretary or president, on account of his excellent voice and his combined dignity and urbanity of deportment.

As a ruler in Israel, however, he cannot be compared with him whose name stands at the head of the first sketch in this volume.

6 ISAAC TURTON

“What he believed, he taught; what he taught he practiced; so that creed and deed harmonized. He had a sweet spirit too, and a pleasant countenance; grace and face making comely union ... Indeed he was a Christian of Christ’s sort.”

The subject of this sketch entered the itinerancy in 1798, and has for some years been upon the supernumerary list; but although, from age and bodily infirmity, he has been compelled partially to rest from his labors, two of his sons have stepped into his place, and give promise of high acceptability and usefulness. Rev. Charles G. Turton has been in the itinerancy seven, and Rev.

Henry H. Turton in the mission field, at New Zealand, about eight years. Mr. Turton, senior, has also a son-in-law who has long been laboring as a very useful missionary in Ceylon, Rev. Robert Spence Hardy, author of “Travels in the Holy Land,” an interesting volume, which has been republished in this country.

During the vigor of his days Mr. Turton commanded much attention in the Wesleyan Connection.

Few of his contemporaries were more acceptable in the pulpit, or out of it exercised a more legitimate and salutary influence upon their respective societies. By his brethren in the ministry he was always held in high estimation, and had he been ambitious of distinction – had he even been less retiring and less indifferent to reputation, other than that of being an acceptable minister of the New Testament, and a faithful overseer of the church of God, the suffrages of his brethren would have freely accorded him office and elevation among them. Few men, with Mr. Turton’s talents as a preacher, have so resolutely pursued the even tenor of their way, content, like the violet of the vale, to reveal their presence by the sweet perfume of their piety, rather than by the splendor of their talents. As a pastor, he has had no superior and few equals. In this respect he was truly a “son of consolation;” all tenderness and sympathy, yet ever faithful in his counsels in sickness and in health, in adversity and prosperity. All his movements among the people, his daily intercourse with them and their children, showed that he cared for their souls, and watched over them as one that must give account. But with all this oneness of purpose, this fidelity to the vows that were upon him, there was so much of gentleness, cheerfulness, and suavity, that he won, in a remarkable degree, the affection of all, while he secured their veneration and respect.

Even at an advanced age, and after years of affliction and sorrow, Mr. Turton’s personal appearance is remarkably pleasing. In the ripe vigor of his days he must have been a handsome man, as indeed those who knew him then declare that he was; the countenance full of intelligence and mildness; the complexion florid; the cheek bones slightly prominent; the forehead high and well developed; the eye of a light blue-gray, clear and sparkling, giving a vivacity somewhat in contrast with the general repose of the face; the frame about five feet ten inches in height, well proportioned in every respect; his gait and movements natural and easy, and the tout-ensemble that of an intelligent, affable, Christian gentleman, heightened not a little by a becoming taste and care in his apparel.

Few men have read more and to better purpose than Mr. Turton. He has for many years possessed an extensive library, the contents of which he has well digested. With every standard theological writer, from the “Fathers” down to the authors of the eighteenth century, he is thoroughly familiar.

The arguments and fallacies of each have been carefully noted in the reading, and are reproduced with perfect ease, in conversation and in the pulpit, as authorities or for refutation. More than most men he possesses the faculty of making the contents of the most abstruse and elaborate works his own; never, however, confounding the various sources whence he derives his knowledge. There is scarcely a standard book of which he cannot impromptu give a complete analysis; and he was always willing to give his younger brethren the benefit of his experience for their guidance, either in the selection of libraries or the prosecution of their studies. He was, indeed, the kind friend and judicious counselor of young preachers, local as well as itinerant.

As a preacher, Mr. Turton has held high rank and commanded the best circuits. For this he is indebted to no adventitious aids. He never declaims; has no redundancy of imagination, and, except in the earliest years of his ministry, has never been an impassioned or impetuous preacher. Neither does he possess a powerful or commanding voice, though it is clear, and capable of considerable modulation. His sermons are always instinct with life, and glow with the even warmth of ardent but well-regulated feeling. The division of his subject is invariably natural; he never resorts to epigrammatic or alliterative grouping of topics, and expatiates upon the sentiment rather than the phraseology of the text; although he occasionally introduces a verbal criticism very felicitously. He is a sound logician, and though entirely self-taught is conversant with the most rigid discipline of the schools. A systematic gradation is observed in the exposition of his subject; every step in the progress of discussion strengthens his position, and carries additional light into the minds of his hearers. This, and the perennial freshness of thought and expression are the peculiarities and excellences of Mr. Turton's preaching. He is not, strictly speaking, an original or profound, but rather a vigorous, comprehensive, accurate thinker. His sermons are nevertheless his own. While he preaches, the man of reading is lost sight of, and the clear thinker and earnest expositor are alone seen and heard. Hence his popularity was constantly on the increase during the vigor of his days.

Where the wishes of the people could be granted, he invariably stayed three years in a circuit; and it then seemed to them as though time was but revealing capacities and resources, on the preacher's part, in the benefits of which they would fain have participated. It was a remark, not infrequently made among the people, that his mind resembled a piece of household furniture, the more it was used the brighter it became.

Mr. Turton was superintendent of one of the Leeds circuits during the disturbances in the societies there upon the "organ question;" and his peace-loving, sensitive nature, keenly suffered during the tumult of unhallowed passion which for a season prevailed. At the same juncture, too, he was called to watch at the bedside of a dying wife – the severest trial to which any man can be exposed; but in Mr. Turton's case especially harrowing, because that wife was in an almost unparalleled degree a help-meet for her husband – not only as the wise and affectionate counselor and guardian of his numerous family, leaving his mind unburdened for the faithful prosecution of the ministry whereunto he was called, but as often encouraging him by her sympathy, stimulating him by her own devotion to the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, sweetly sharing the yoke with him in his trials, and joying with him in the triumphs of his faith and love. To this day her praise is in all the churches.

From this double sorrow Mr. Turton never fully recovered. There is little of the iron in his nature, little of the sturdy oak, to brave such a storm; and while, with unwavering faith, the well-instructed saint reverently bowed his head, and unflinchingly said, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good unto him," the heart of the man was smitten with a sorrow that the world knew not of. Still Mr.

Turton labored diligently in word and doctrine; but the stroke which removed the desire of his eyes – the companion who had shared in sweetest sympathy his hopes and fears, and whose enduring friendship had been his solace amid all outward trials – was lacerating his heart; and after a few years he retired from the itinerant ranks, and patiently but hopefully awaits the summons, "Come up hither," and the commendation, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

7 ROBERT YOUNG

"Much of easy dignity there lies
In the frank lifting of his cordial eyes."

The Rev. Robert Young may be well described as "a man with a presence," he being gifted with many of those physical advantages which contribute to a favorable first impression. His complexion is light and florid. His features are regular and well proportioned, except the mouth, which is rather small, and gives an air of precision to the face. This is redeemed by the eyes, which have a very benevolent expression. The whole countenance indicates honesty and piety. To an agreeable physiognomy are added a well-built, robust, and imposing frame, and a good and powerful voice.

His elocution is somewhat faulty, he having acquired a habit of giving a sharp, abrupt enunciation to the final syllable, and an internal reverberation at the close of a sentence.

Mr. Young is a native of the north of England. In the year 1820, under a conviction of duty, wrought in his mind under a sermon by the Rev. Robert Newton, he offered himself for the missionary work, and was sent first to Jamaica, in the West Indies, and subsequently to Nova Scotia, where he labored with good success for three years. As may readily be supposed, a missionary's life on that station was attended with great hardships, and Mr. Young had his share. While he was filling that appointment he experienced some remarkable deliverances from danger and from death. One of these he related while I was riding with him to a country appointment, eight miles distant from Leeds, in a fog so thick that we could not see beyond our horses' heads. Mr. Young remarked that the night brought to his recollection an interposition of divine Providence on his behalf while on the Nova Scotia mission. He was returning from night preaching, and had to cross a stream or river which was only fordable at ebb tide. The dense fog prevented his finding the ford; and his horse soon began to stumble and flounder over the rocks which formed the bed of the river. Perceiving his error, and judging that the animal's instinct would be his best guide out of the difficulty, he threw the reins upon his neck, and by kind words encouraged him to seek a path for himself. The horse was, however, equally bewildered by the fog, and refused to move. While yet pondering over his dilemma, he heard the distant roar of the tide; and well knew that in a few minutes it would overtake him, and that if it did so it would bring inevitable destruction. The horse seemed to have instinctively the same apprehension; and Mr. Young felt the animal trembling under him. He lifted up his heart in prayer, and was commending his spirit to God, when he heard from the opposite side the voice of a teamster arresting his team. The thought flashed upon his mind that the man had reached the ford, and had discovered that he was too late to cross. Mr. Young's horse, also, seemed to comprehend the matter, neighed loudly, and, obeying the whip and rein, dashed boldly across the rocky bed in the direction of the voice, and reached the opposite shore just in time to save his own and his master's life.

So true it is, --

“How are thy saints blest, O Lord!
How sure is their defense!
Eternal wisdom is their guide;
Their help Omnipotence.”

Subsequently Mr. Young was again appointed to the West India Islands, where he was equally successful in winning souls to Christ, and secured, in an eminent degree, the affections of the poor slaves, and the confidence and good-will of their masters. In this sphere of labor he continued until the fell spirit of persecution was aroused, and he and his co-laborers were, for a season, prohibited from exercising their ministry.

In the “Wesleyan Centenary Takings,” I find the following notice of the subject of this sketch: “Robert Young – a powerful voice, and in general well managed. Good address: stirring – impassioned – melting – awakening. Not profound, nor yet lofty: mostly substantial. Seems to stand at the entrance of the way of life, beseeching, exhorting, importuning, and pressing the multitude to turn the face, the foot, and the heart, in that direction. Exceedingly successful; but more popular on the side of piety than of reading and extraordinary intellect. ‘And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.’”

The only drawback to Mr. Young's excellence as a preacher is that he is too mechanical. He is, I presume, strictly a memoriter preacher. When warmed by his subject, he becomes impassioned; but is sure to close his passages abruptly, like a steed suddenly checked by a strong hand and curb, when going at his full speed, or as though the rider had unexpectedly come upon a fence which he dared not leap. He seems timid about venturing a single sentence beyond what he has prepared, though he makes good use of what has already been elaborated in his study. The evident caution with which he proceeds, especially in the earlier portions of his discourse, awakens almost an apprehension on his behalf, and in some degree withdraws the hearer's attention from the subject to the man; yet it is soon apparent that the preacher's care is not so much for himself, or his reputation, as that he may keep in the very center of what he believes to be the direct avenue to the hearts of some of his congregation, and that his sole concern is that his ministry may be effectual to their salvation. The application of his sermon is always forcible, and often impetuous and overwhelming: now the preacher labors under no fear of getting over the lines. Having reached the citadel of the sinner's heart, he lifts the hammer of the word, and plies it vigorously against the bolted door,

blow following blow with such rapidity and force that the fortress must indeed be impregnable if it yielded not to the assault.

In one particular, Mr. Young is a pattern for all ministers. He preserves the dignity of the ministerial office. In the pulpit, if he does not win the souls, he always secures the respect, of his audience. All is solemnity, sobriety, and sanctified decorum. In his loudest tones and most impassioned moments he never seems to forget that he holds his commission from Jehovah, and is speaking in Christ's stead. Good taste marks all his pulpit and public exercises; colloquialisms, vulgarisms, epigrammatic quirks and quaintnesses, never pollute the word which he preaches. Nor, often as I have heard him preach, do I remember in the pulpit a single allusion, unless commendatory, to any other sect of professing Christians – not because he was not competent to pulpit controversy, for too often such are most prone to indulge in it, but that he believed the strength and time devoted to such controversy would be more successful in uprooting error if zealously devoted to preaching, with the demonstration of the Spirit, the truth as it is in Jesus. One cannot help thinking that some preachers hold an opposite opinion, and believe that the gospel is a less potent weapon for the world's conversion than controversy.

The several small works which Mr. Young has written, give a just idea of his ministerial character and plans. The labors of few Wesleyan preachers have been more eminently crowned with success; few have had such a career of continuous usefulness, or have been instrumental in the conversion of so many who have continued steadfast in the faith. Mr. Young is a Boanerges, but that is not the great secret of his success. His word falls often as the dew of heaven, as the former and latter rain, upon the hearts of his hearers, winning them for Christ and heaven. He is, too, unwearied and unceasing in his labors. He knows no intermission; from the day he enters upon his circuit to the day he leaves it – autumn, winter, spring, and summer – he ceases not from his work, and it is not at all unusual for marked revivals to continue many months, without intermission, in the circuit where he is stationed.

Let me draw a picture of Mr. Young's method of conducting a Sunday evening prayer meeting. He has been preaching to a crowded congregation; his subject has been, "The Folly and Danger of Indecision." The large congregation have sung the third hymn; prayer has been offered up, the benediction pronounced, and the people dismissed with the announcement that a prayer meeting will immediately be commenced – for the preacher usually adopts that course, preferring that those only should remain who desire to do so. Very few comparatively have departed, and Mr. Young descends into the altar and gives out four or five verses of a hymn, the tune of which is struck by some member of the congregation, and the rest join with heart and voice in singing. Before prayer is commenced, (the official brethren having come into the neighborhood of the altar while the hymn was being sung,) the preacher addresses a few remarks on the design of the prayer meeting, encouraging rather than urging any who desire to obtain mercy to come to the communion rails. He then calls by name upon two brethren to pray, and probably goes into the body of the house to invite to the altar any who may seem to be seriously disposed. When the brethren called upon have engaged in prayer, the minister gives out a couple of verses from the Methodist hymnbook, which are sung to some tune known to all the congregation, who always rise and join in the singing. Thus, instead of being lookers on, or mere listeners, they themselves take part in the exercise, and preserve within their own hearts, by participation, the hallowed emotions incident to the occasion. Those who approach the altar are counseled and prayed with by the senior brethren. After prayer the preacher again selects a verse or two of an appropriate hymn, again the people rise from their knees (the penitents alone remaining prostrate) and join in the singing, and, if deemed desirable, the minister selects a brother to give a short exhortation, or calls again upon two to pray, sometimes selecting such as are not in the neighborhood of the altar. This order is preserved until nine o'clock, when the meeting is dismissed with the announcement that it will be continued (if it appear desirable) an hour longer; but the younger members of the congregation are requested to go to their homes. Some heads of families will, at this juncture, retire with their families, that family worship may be performed before the younger branches retire to rest. The meeting then continues as before. Mr. Young generally stays to the close; indeed, I do not remember ever to have seen him leave a prayer meeting, though it should continue until eleven o'clock, or even till midnight.

Meantime the penitents are properly cared for, and as one after another finds peace, it is publicly announced, and all join in singing,

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow,"

pealed forth with a heartiness which shows that all sympathize with the ransomed soul, and rejoice in its

deliverance. Mr. Young is always careful to secure the name and residence of every seeker of salvation, and each is furnished with a list of the class leaders, and the place and time of each class meeting. During the week they are visited by a preacher or class leader, who ascertains what time is most convenient for them to attend that means of grace, and they are directed accordingly. I cannot do better than recommend to the reader Mr. Young's small volume – The Importance of Prayer Meetings in promoting Revivals of Religion, published at the Methodist Book Concern, where the plans he uniformly acts upon are defined and defended; and earnestly too would I recommend to all who feel an interest in the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, the perusal of his Suggestions for the Conversion of the World.

8 DANIEL ISAAC

“His words are strong, but not with anger fraught;
A love benignant he hath lived and taught.”

-- Chaucer --

“Fearless he is and scorning all disguise
What he dares do or think, though men may start,
He speaks with mild yet unaverted eyes.”

-- Cowper --

The Methodist ministry has always been distinguished for diversity of personal character and variety of talents and acquirements. Men of high and of low degree, blessed with worldly competence or familiar with poverty – of classic taste or of ruder mind – sons of thunder and sons of consolation – from the plow and from the mechanic's shop – from all sorts and conditions of men has Methodism selected its ministry, and its vast agency for promoting the Redeemer's kingdom in the earth. Hitherto it has considered sterling and established piety, and strong practical good sense, the principal requisites for the successful preaching of the gospel, adding to these other qualifications as circumstances might justify or demand. It has thus always met the wants of the multitude, and yet has produced some of the greatest ornaments of their times. If Methodism were given to boasting, it might assert its claim to one of the greatest linguists England ever had, more than one perfect natural orator, and theologians worthy of the days of the Puritans. The last generation of Methodist preachers embraced many men of extraordinary natural talents and great acquirements; Bradburn, and Benson, and Clarke, and Watson, and Isaac, and Lessey, and others who have entered into their rest; and Bunting, and Newton, and Atherton, and Beaumont, and others who diligently labor in word and doctrine, looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus.

The memory of the Rev. Daniel Isaac is blessed. All who knew him venerated him, not less for his high integrity and his genuine kindness of heart, than for the masculine, massive character of his mind. He entered the itinerancy in 1799, and closed his labors and life in the city of York in 1834.

He was somewhat remarkable in his personal appearance; of about the middle stature, of a sallow and imbrowned complexion, of strong and heavy frame, narrow shouldered, though otherwise muscular. The countenance strongly indicated the man. The forehead was high rather than wide, and until the latter years of his life additional apparent altitude was given to it by a premature baldness of the upper or front part of the head. When subsequently the peruke-maker [wig-maker – DVM] had been employed to remedy the defect, the intellectuality of the whole was sadly marred. The eye was peculiar – a dark pupil in the center of an unusually light gray ring, combining the expression of softness, quickness, and penetration. The mouth was very expressive – the under lip slightly pouted [projected – DVM], and the whole cynical in its character. His dress was unlike the dress of his brethren, and altogether at variance with clerical usage. His most common apparel comprised a black straw or chip hat, drab nether garments, white or gray hose, strong shoes with leather ties, and an olive brown coat. Sometimes he appeared in the pulpit, as well as in the street, with the further peculiarity of a colored neckerchief and parti-colored vest.

After having seen Mr. Isaac, and listened to his caustic severity on men and manners, it was almost impossible to avoid associating the idea of the ancient cynic with the modern “polemic divine.”

Yet with an excess of apparent and much real sternness of character, there were also great native generosity and kindness, even tenderness, in Mr. Isaac’s disposition; and these were manifest to all in whom he had confidence and on whose sterling worth he relied. He was a faithful, steadfast, sympathizing friend. The harsher features of the man were shown only to the affected and vain; to those who walked on stilts, so to speak, and plumed themselves upon exterior proprieties at the expense of a true and manly excellence and the more solid virtues. To voluntary humility on the one hand, and to overweening pride on the other, he was an uncompromising foe; but in the social circle, among those whom he knew and loved, he was affectionate and pleasant, and delighted in sallies of wit and good humor ...

Mr. Isaac was, without doubt, ardently attached to the itinerancy, but even his “traveling” had its peculiarities. While most of the preachers preferred equestrian exercise when visiting the distant parts of their circuits, he was always a pedestrian from choice, and might often be seen in summer on the public highway, his vest unbuttoned; his coat laid over his arm, and his glazed hat in his hand, trudging cheerfully to his “appointment,” the very picture of a hardy, contented farmer, caring for nothing among men but to maintain his independence. His style of preaching was also unique. He copied from no man in anything, and in the pulpit was as fearless in the expression of his views as in private life. He often disregarded the mere textual division of a passage, and expatiated with great force on its doctrine or sentiment. It was a defect in his preaching, that while the truth from his lips struck with sledge-hammer force upon the conscience and judgment of the hearer, the sermon lacked that persuasive tenderness by which, perhaps more than in any other way, sinners are brought to lay down the weapons of their rebellion, and seek reconciliation with God.

Mr. Isaac seemed to be more immediately “set for the defense of the truth,” and woe be to the man who dared to assail religion while he was on guard. Not that he contented himself with defense merely; he was mighty in attack as well as bold in defense; after driving the enemy from the walls of the citadel, he would make a vigorous sortie upon his forces, drive them from the stronghold of unbelief, and bringing all his powers to bear upon the rebellious citadel, would use the battering ram with such systematic, continuous force, that the breach was sure to be effected whether the enemy yielded or not.

The writer well remembers a sermon Mr. Isaac preached in Brunswick Chapel, Leeds, on the duty of union with the church of Christ, irrespective of denominational distinctions, in which he combated the various objections urged against church fellowship. Some of these were summarily disposed of as the mere subterfuges of a man not bold enough to be honest; and then he took up the common excuse that the church is not what it professes to be, and that its members are far from being as good as they ought to be. This sermon was subsequently published. The following are nearly the very words in which this excuse was dealt with.

“You pretend,” said he, “that the church is not good enough. Some of its members, you say, do not live up to their profession, but with all the noise they make about religion, are very loose in their morals. You tell us that you hate hypocrisy, and affirm, that if you were to join us, you would act a consistent part. The objection contains two causes of regret. The first is, that there should be some defective characters in the church. Our Saviour, however, has assured us that some tares will grow up with the wheat, and that both must grow together until the harvest, or judgment. The gospel net encloses a great multitude of different kinds of fish, and must be drawn to the shores of eternity before the final separation is made, when the good will be gathered into vessels and the bad be cast away.

In the present state of things, however desirable it may be to find a perfect church, it is impossible ... the hypocrites may serve as a beacon to warn you against unfaithfulness. With all its defects, however, the church is superior to the world in supplying examples of holiness and the means of attaining it ... Now you boggle at the church because it is not quite perfect, and in the mean time remain in fellowship with the world. You profess to be religious, and your religion seems to consist in little else than vilifying the character of pious people, as though it would be a reproach to you to abandon such as make no profession for the sake of enjoying their society.

“The other cause of regret is that so shining a Christian as you would make, if you were but among us, should deny us the benefit of your fellowship and example. You would live up to your profession.

In your character there would be neither spot nor blemish, nor any such thing. You would be a perfect Christian.

Why, you are the very man we need. You would make us ashamed of ourselves.

Such a prodigy of piety would soon work miracles among us, and rouse the most sluggish to imitate such resplendent virtue; and as for hypocrites, the most impenitent among them would not have face enough to look upon such a paragon of purity, but would flee from your presence as the Israelites did from Moses when he came down from the mount irradiated with divine glory. O thou detestable hypocrite! To prate about God's children, and undertake to hector them for coming short of perfection, when thou art thyself in league with sin, and canst not be persuaded to forsake it; art seldom on thy knees praying to God secretly; and perhaps never worshipping with thy family; and art all the while affecting to be too holy for the society of those who, to say the least of it, are endeavoring to 'work out their salvation with fear and trembling.' You are very holy, no doubt; but it looks a little suspicious that you decline the society of saints, and prefer the fellowship of sinners." Having indulged in this irony for some time, with an expression of contempt and scorn beyond description, he rested his left elbow upon the Bible, and, leaning over the front of the pulpit, heaped warning upon rebuke, with a force of language which few men could surpass.

Once he preached in Carver Street Chapel, Sheffield, from, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee;" and with great force commented upon the infidelities of professing Christians. As he approached the application of his discourse, his dissatisfaction with the state of the church seemed to increase; his eye flashed; his lower lip assumed a pouting expression, the sure sign that a storm of sarcastic rebuke was gathering; and he stood erect in the pulpit. "Why," he exclaimed, "even in your classes, among yourselves, how seldom is an open, 'unequivocal avowal of your love to Christ heard! You talk about loving Christ 'in a measure.' I should like to know what kind of a measure you use; for I fear your love would not crack a nutshell if it were forced into it. But says one, 'I hope I do love God: I trust I love the Lord sincerely;' and you quote sickly poetry to confirm your hope.

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

Wretched poetry, and worse divinity! Away with such twaddle! What would you think of a mother thus addressing her infant?

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love my child, or no?
Is it mine, or is it not?
And yet you are guilty of the much greater absurdity."

During the stay of Mr. Isaac in that circuit the people were favored with tokens of the divine presence, and some of the members of the society, in lively gratitude for the "promise of a shower," were wont to say "amen," in an audible voice while the minister prayed that the Lord --

"would shortly pour
All the spirit of his grace;"

and even went so far as to utter a like response during the sermon, when the preacher mingled an ejaculatory prayer with the more didactic portions of his discourse. In the estimation of some, this was an unjustifiable, if not unpardonable, interruption to the train of placid thought in which their own unmoved hearts were wont to indulge; and complaints were not made to the trustees and stewards, accompanied by an intimation that unless the "disturbances" were abated they (certain wealthy members, who paid handsome rents for their pews) would be compelled to leave the church.

This being a rather serious matter, the trustees represented the case to Mr. Isaac; and hinted that the loss of the complainants would, financially, be a misfortune. Mr. Isaac heard all without moving a muscle of his face, and then briefly remarked, "Leave it to me, brethren. I'll try to put the matter right on Sunday morning." This was at the beginning of the week; and as the trustees were made pleased with the prospect of the matter being "put right," and taking it for granted that the promise implied all they wished, they could not forbear apprising the complaining parties of what the "superintendent" had said; and their joy at the information being very great, must needs also find utterance; so that by Saturday night it was pretty generally understood that "Mr. Isaac was going to put down those

shouters" -- that being the conclusion to which all parties came, as by common consent. As for those against whom the terrible battery of his irony was to be directed, they scarcely dared to open their lips, and were so cast down that they hesitated about being present at the morning preaching, albeit they were good men and true, and loved the ministry of the life-giving word. They abided by their principles, however, and were in their accustomed seats; but though Mr. Isaac prayed with unusual fervor, their responses were "few and far between." Under the fear of man, they were ensnared, to their own hurt: "Hosannas languished on their tongues, and their devotion died." The congregation was large, and an undefinable excitement pervaded it. The text was announced: "Let all things be done decently and in order." Significant glances were exchanged. The response makers hung down their heads, and the anti-response members lifted up theirs, while the neutrals looked compassionately at the "noisy brethren," and then at the preacher, as though they would beseech him not to be too severe, seeing that the offenders were good Christians, and really meant well, though they did say "amen" in a louder tone than some others. "Let all things done decently and in order," repeated the preacher, looking leisurely round upon the large audience, as though he would ask who disputed the apostolic injunction. "No one here," said he, "disputes the authority of the rule, or doubts its applicability to the public worship of God. We will therefore at once enter upon the inquiry, What is the order here enjoined by the Head of the church, adhered to by the primitive Christians, and still obligatory upon the church of Christ?" He then showed that in the apostolic age, in the days of the "fathers," even amid the corruptions of the Papal Church, and especially in the purer and more evangelical periods of the church's history, the plan of responding to petitions addressed to the throne of the heavenly Grace was universally adopted. The surprise of the congregation was unbounded. Those who enjoyed a sincere and audible response were rejoiced; those who did not were compelled to submit; and, as Mr. Isaac had promised, the matter was from that time "put right." That sermon was the nucleus of his popular essay on the word "amen." An instance of the indignant and sarcastic severity with which he sometimes reprov'd open profanity occurred while he was stationed in the Sheffield circuit. An infidel bookseller, copying, and probably emboldened by, the example of a London tradesman of infamous memory, exhibited in his shop window a hideous and obscene picture, as a representation of the sacred Trinity; and, surpassing the metropolitan in utter and shameless profanity, attached a label to the picture, to the effect that a portrait of the devil was wanted as a companion picture. This caught Mr. Isaac's eye as he passed, and his righteous anger was awakened. Stepping into a grocer's shop on the opposite side of the street, he asked for pen, ink, and paper, and hastily scrawling these words, addressed them to the offender: "Sir, if you want a portrait of the devil, get your own taken; for who so like the father as the son? -- D. Isaac." "There," said Mr. I. To the clerk, "just take that to the vile fellow across the way." The young man declined, perhaps thinking it unneighborly, or fearing an unpleasant result.

"Then I'll take it," said Mr. Isaac. The message was soon noised abroad, for the grocer told many of his friends; and, in the course of the day, first one vagrant boy, and then another wicked urchin, would put his head just inside the door of the infidel's shop, in the window of which the offensive requisition was still suspended, and call out, "Get your own taken, for who so like the father am the son?" On the following day, quite a crowd of youngsters was assembled, and the inquiry was repeated in almost every possible modulation of voice, until the wretched man was so annoyed that he called in the aid of the police. This but increased the notoriety of the rebuke, and that again swelled the numbers of the crowd. The public feeling, too, was with the boys, for common decency had been outraged. The result was, that in the course of two or three days the man was obliged to close his shop and decamp, unable to withstand the torrent of ridicule and contempt which Mr. Isaac had been the means of turning upon him.

Though not no circumscribed fame as a preacher, it was, perhaps, by his controversial writings that the subject of this sketch was most widely known, I think his earliest publication made its appearance in 1802 or 1803, bearing the title, "Universal Restoration Refuted, in a Series of Letters addressed to Mr. W. Vidler." This Mr. Vidler visited a place in the Lynn circuit, when Mr. Isaac was stationed there, and, while advocating his peculiar doctrines, took frequent occasion, as was common in that day, to heap abuse and calumny upon the Methodists. The attention of Mr. Isaac was drawn to the subject; he took an opportunity of hearing for himself, made memoranda of various points, called upon Mr. Vidler with the notes the following morning; and that gentleman having acknowledged their accuracy, Mr. Isaac apprised him that he regarded his doctrines as of so injurious a tendency, that he deemed it his duty to guard his congregation against them; and that with an honest desire not to misrepresent Mr. Vidler's sentiments, he had called upon him for the confirmation of what he supposed him to teach. The course taken by Mr. Isaac was like himself, for he was as proverbially candid in stating an opponent's views, as he was severe in

controverting them.

This publication, which is said to have borne the palpable impress of his vigorous mind, has been more than once reprinted in this country.

In 1809 he published a small volume of sermons, on the "Person of Jesus Christ," of which it has been with truth remarked, that "in them the divinity of the Son of God is established by Scriptural evidence, and by a process of reasoning rarely brought to bear upon the subject in so small a compass."

Mr. Isaac's next work, and that which will probably be the most permanent, as of all his writings it had, during his lifetime, the widest popularity, was his *Ecclesiastical Claims Investigated*. It was printed in Edinburgh, in 1815. It has passed through several editions, but has not, I believe, been republished in America. It consists of five essays, treating respectively of uninterrupted succession, ordination, the spiritual gifts and powers of the clergy, learning and ministerial qualifications. The preface plainly indicates that the author had no intention to treat the subject with unnecessary tenderness. The design of the publication was conceived soon after the defeat of "Lord Sidmouth's bill," and its execution was hastened by a new interpretation given to the "Act of Toleration," by which, as the author contended, religious liberty was reduced to nearly a cipher. Any infringement of liberty was sure to find in Mr. Isaac a fearless and uncompromising foe. His soul abhorred intolerance and tyranny in every form or association. He was both active and successful in opposing the bill of Lord Sidmouth. His advice, during those days of anxiety, when Dissenters of every grade were alarmed for the safety of their dearest rights, the wisdom with which he drew up a series of resolutions for adoption at a meeting of Wesleyan Methodists, and the influence of his example, pointed him out at once as a "leader unto the people." The same jealousy of encroachment showed itself in reference to all merely sectional and local matters.

Soon after the defeat of that vile attempt to destroy religious liberty in Great Britain, and to reestablish the waning supremacy of the hierarchy of the Established Church – which defeat was owing in a great degree to the vigorous measures adopted by the Wesleyan committee of privileges, and to the personal exertions of Dr. Adam Clarke, Mr. Isaac, Mr. Bunting, and others, in carrying out those measures – a new interpretation was given to the Act of Toleration, simultaneously at every quarter-sessions in the kingdom, with one or two exceptions, in consequence of which all applications for license to preach were refused to Methodists on the technical objection that the act was not designed to embrace them, and extended only to those who were openly, avowedly, and conscientiously Dissenters. This sudden and universal change in the interpretation of that act by the magistracy of the land was at first incomprehensible, but the mystery was shortly solved as it was ascertained that a circular had been sent to every court, instructing the magistrates in this new reading, said circular emanating from the concocters and abettors of the defeated bill, notwithstanding the repeated avowal, by the same parties in parliament, that no infringement of the religious rights and privileges of any denomination was intended by it. This attempt to do that by underhand practice which they had publicly disavowed, excited Mr. Isaac's alarm and indignation, and was with him the moving cause in writing his "Ecclesiastical Claims;" for though the Methodists and Dissenters had demanded and obtained a new toleration act, yet Mr. Isaac rightly concluded that it was best more folly to secure public opinion in behalf of the principles of religious liberty, as the only guaranty that the rights of conscience should continue to be protected. He observes: "Acts of parliament are of very little consequence if not supported by public opinion. When the sense of the nation is opposed to them, they will soon grow obsolete or be repealed." Nor did he like the preamble to the new act, which avowed that the measure was framed solely on principles of expediency -- "Whereas it is expedient," &c – so that could public opinion be enlisted against religious freedom, the expediency would be declared no longer to exist, the act would be repealed, and the Act of Uniformity would be revived. Moreover, while much had been said in parliament and elsewhere in favor of religious liberty, yet was there nothing, either in the old or new act of toleration, distinctly recognizing the rights of conscience; and Mr. Isaac saw that in the absence of such recognition by the law of the land – while indeed a declaratory preamble negatived those rights by placing the passage of the act on the basis of expediency there was security for the permanence of religious liberty only in enlightened public opinion. To that tribunal he made his appeal; and never, perhaps, were great principles more summarily dealt with, nor long-established usages more unceremoniously beaten to the ground. This is not the place to enter into a discussion or analysis of Mr. Isaac's arguments in this book. Suffice it to say, that the severity of its tone, the fearlessness of its rebukes, its unsparing and almost merciless invectives, and its bold and well-sustained claims for the equal right of all preachers of the gospel to minister in holy things without interruption, at

once startled the community and excited general attention. Although the sentiments of the author could not properly be said to involve the body of which he was a member, yet there is always, in such a case, a tendency in the public mind to attribute to the body opinions which a prominent member deliberately publishes, especially when the position of the body, in reference to the subject discussed, is somewhat doubtful, as was the case with the British Conference of the Wesleyan Methodists.

The pertinacity with which both Churchmen and Dissenters persisted in attributing the sentiments avowed by Mr. Isaac, in reference to the principle of an established church, to his brethren in the ministry, gave many of them considerable annoyance, they not holding his extreme views – many dissenting from them totally – and, perhaps, all disapproving of the severe and uncourteous language of many parts of the book. It is doubtful, however, whether the Conference would officially have taken notice of the matter but for the following circumstances. Mr. Isaac desired to advertise his work in the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine. A committee, appointed annually by the Conference, is charged with the oversight of all advertisements and other business matters connected with the Magazine, who, after due deliberation, judged it best to refuse the application, principally on the ground that the announcement of such a book by a Methodist preacher, through the Methodist Magazine, the recognized organ of the body, might be construed into an approval of its contents and its spirit; or that at least it would be a tacit acknowledgment that it was not deemed objectionable, since a paragraph stands at the head of the advertising sheet, advising the public that a supervisory power is exercised. At any rate the committee had a right to exclude the advertisement if they thought proper; and, perhaps, under the circumstances they acted wisely, and in accordance with their responsibility to the Conference. The dispute between the Dissenters and the friends of the Established Church was then coming very high. The Wesleyan Conference had always stood aloof from the quarrel; and the committee as faithful stewards were bound to take this fact into consideration. Mr. Isaac, however, felt aggrieved by their refusal; and some of his less judicious friends made it a matter of serious complaint. At the ensuing Conference the committee presented their report, and as much censure had been cast upon this action, it was made the subject of full examination and remark. The report was accepted, and the following resolution was adopted, by a vote of one hundred and nineteen to eighty-six:

“Resolved, That the Conference approve of the conduct of their book committee in London, in having refused to facilitate the circulation of a book on Ecclesiastical Claims, which was printed in Scotland, and pushed by a member of our connection; and deem it a public duty to declare, in the fear of God, their most decided disapprobation of various passages contained in it, as well as of the general spirit and style of it, which the Conference believe to be ‘unbecoming and unchristian.’” In the year 1820 Mr. Isaac was appointed to the Leicester circuit, and there formed an acquaintance with the great Robert Hall, which ripened into a warm and permanent friendship. Differently as the two men were constituted, they had some sentiments in common – the same ardent love of liberty, and something of the same abruptness of manner. In their style of preaching they differed widely.

At each other’s houses they would sit together for hours conversing, canvassing the worthies of theological literature, and bewailing the mental dwarfishness and the puerility of modern days.

Leicester might almost be said to be the head quarters of the Baptist denomination in England. Yet here, with the prospect of remaining probably two years on the circuit, Mr. Isaac published his next work, entitled “Baptism Discussed; containing Scripture Principles, Precepts, and Precedents, in favor of Baptism of Infants and Little Children.” Some surprise was excited by this publication, because the author’s intimacy with Mr. Hall, the champion of the opposite view, was well known.

A second edition was soon called for. An anecdote, similar to one current respecting Fletcher’s Checks, is told in relation to this volume. Some one inquired of Mr. Hall if he had read Mr. Isaac’s work. “No,” said he, “I have not read it, and I do not intend to read it. I know exactly what he would say. We are very good friends, and I intend that we shall remain so.” To all forms of prayer in public worship, and to instrumental music in churches, Mr. Isaac had a great dislike. I do not know, however, that he ever carried his opposition to the latter so far as did the Rev. Philip Garrett, who, on one occasion, it is said, declared from the pulpit that “if he saw the devil running away with that box of whistles, (meaning the organ,) he would not cry, ‘Stop thief.’” The introduction of organs into Methodist chapels Mr. Isaac strenuously opposed, and published his sentiments in the form of a pamphlet, entitled Vocal Melody. His known sentiments on this subject led the Leeds separatists to expect his co-operation in their opposition to the action of the Conference authorizing the erection of an organ in Brunswick Chapel. In this they

reckoned without their host.

So soon as he saw that the organ was made a stalking horse for ulterior objects and radical changes, he turned his face against them, warmly defending his brethren from the unchristian imputations which were cast upon them. He also differed from the majority of the Conference on the question of ordination by the laying on of hands; and at the London Conference of 1822 made an able and powerful speech upon the subject. This was part of his deep rooted Dissent, for he was a Dissenter in principle, and it was probably from a knowledge of this, that the Conference never appointed him to a circuit where the form of church prayer was read in the chapels.

About the year 1825 the Roman Catholics made a vigorous attempt to regain something of their former power in Great Britain, and directed their efforts especially against the British and Foreign Bible Society. Mr. Isaac promptly came to the rescue, for he was as ardent an opponent of Popery as any Protestant could desire. He had it in contemplation to publish "A Short and Easy Method with the Roman Catholics," adopting part of the title, with something of the plan, of Leslie's unanswerable treatise against the deists. The doctrine of transubstantiation was to be the principal point of attack, because, as he observed, and the remark showed that he knew where his strength lay, "it was as capable of being made to appear ridiculous as any topic that could be suggested." And to a friend he further characteristically said, "If my way to the citadel is clear by one entrance, that will be as good as a thousand major ones; and to go in search of others would be a needless waste of time." A condensed argument on transubstantiation from the pen of Mr. Isaac would have been of great value, and would doubtless have produced a powerful effect. Protestants cannot but regret that he did not carry out his purpose.

One other work remains to be noticed, in which his talents were united with those of his friend, Rev. James Everett. It was a masterpiece of wit and irony, and attracted much attention. It was called "The Head-piece and the Helmet; or Phrenology incompatible with Reason and Revelation;" and was in the form of conversations between "Isaac, the seer," (Mr. Isaac,) and "James, the less," (Mr. Everett.) The miscalled science of phrenology was most unmercifully quizzed, and its infidel tendencies were strikingly pointed out in this work. Great was the gloom cast over the Methodist Societies when the intelligence was spread through the various circuits that Daniel Isaac had been stricken down by paralysis – it seemed an unfitting end for such a man, and was certainly unexpected. That he should linger out his days in helplessness and gloom was an unwelcome thought to all, and the sufferer himself submitted to the dispensation with less reluctance than did his friends, thereby showing that the principles he had taught while he "labored in word and doctrine" were those upon which he himself was prepared to act, when opportunity was given him. Of his final hours I know but little – or rather can, at this distance of time, recall but little. The following extract from the Minutes of the Conference will supply my lack of information "On Sunday, May 20th, 1832, he was in Manchester, for the purpose of preaching in behalf of a Sunday school, when he was seized with paralysis, from the deplorable effects of which he never fully recovered. At the following Conference he was so far restored as to justify his third appointment to his old and favorite station, the York circuit; but he only preached once or twice, and then sunk, the hopeless and sorrowful victim of a disease which no art could remove, and which no attentions could assuage. The powers of his mind were awfully impaired. The long and affecting struggle between a mind naturally active and vigorous, and a body worn out by an incurable malady, terminated in his happy death, on Friday, March 21st, 1834. Although the event had been long expected, it produced, notwithstanding, a great sensation; and his funeral, which took place on the following Thursday, served to show that his friends in York and its neighborhood had not lost their recollection of his worth; a long train of voluntary mourners giving to the solemnity an unusual and affecting interest. Daniel Isaac was an eminent, a good, and a useful man; and has passed into that blessed state, in which, with his brethren that had gone before, he for ever proves that his 'labor has not been in vain in the Lord.'"

A great and good man was Daniel Isaac, doing everything from principle and a conviction of duty.

More polished shafts has God employed in the ministry – a truer man, never. Kind, and generous, and self-denying, he was yet firm in the maintenance of the right, just toward all, and enjoyed with a grateful heart the pleasures of social intercourse. At the call of duty he would leave the sweetest delights of converse and home to minister to the wants of the poor, and to visit the widow and the fatherless: Verily he hath now his reward:

"Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in."

9 SAMUEL HICK

“Jest not at preacher’s language or condition; --
How knowest thou but thy sins made him miscarry,
Then turn thy faults and his into confession.
God sent him, whatsoever he be. O tarry,
And love him for his Master! His condition,
Though it be ill, makes him no ill physician.”
-- Herbert’s Church Porch --

Samuel Hick, the “Village Blacksmith,” was a Wesleyan Methodist local preacher; but his fame and usefulness were not confined to his own locality. As a preacher, he alone was his own parallel, nor is it likely that nature and grace will again meet in so strange a combination. His personal appearance, especially when in connection with his pulpit ministrations, made a first impression not the most favorable. His “huge, unwieldy, Herculean frame,” his ungainly gait, his coarse and strongly marked features, his disregard of unfitting habiliments – all tended to this; but the feeling gave way before closer observation. The coarseness of the features was compensated by a broad good-humor, that lurked not in the eye, nor about the mouth, but played over the whole face – like the reflection of light upon a polished surface – assuming something of shrewdness as it lingered for a moment in his small quick eye, then irradiating his whole countenance with sincerity, and goodness, and gushing good-will to all mankind. As he ascended the pulpit stairs they would creak beneath his ponderous frame. The opening hymn would be read in a broad Yorkshire dialect: “We know, by faith we know,

If this vile hoose, of claah,
This tabernacle sink below,
In rooinous decaah;”

yet with intensity of feeling which could proceed only from the heart of one who testified of that which he felt; and his utterance of the hymn won the heart of at least the pious portion of his congregation. The spirit which animated his soul passed like lightning through the assembly; the holy fire was kindled in their souls; and all joined heartily in singing the joyous anthem. On such an occasion the writer first heard “Sammy Hick” preach. The man of God was then far past the meridian of life, and was somewhat infirm. At the conclusion of the first hymn, he slowly knelt down, and remained silent a few seconds; then lifting up his voice, he commenced an earnest supplication, with great power, and clothed in language remarkable for its simplicity. Prayer was his stronghold; not that he had studied the subject, but he had habitually practiced the duty, and it had become his delight. He knew nothing of formularies, was ignorant of what divines have pronounced essential to the composition of public prayer, and had read none of their elaborate treatises. He had learned “a more excellent way” All he desired to know was that God was his reconciled Father, ever more willing to bestow than his child was to receive. No plan or arrangement seemed to him so natural as asking directly for the blessing which he believed that he or his congregation needed; and his first petition generally was, Lord, teach us how to pray.” The possibility of not being heard in the thing that he prayed for never entered his thoughts; and in this, doubtless, lay his strength, and the wonderful prevalency of his intercessions. He believed the Saviour, who had said “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, it shall be given unto you” “be it according to thy faith.” On one occasion, when some one of weaker faith suggested to him that he was a little bold in his petitions, his reply was characteristic of the man: “Hey! Bless thee, bairn, that’s the way I get what I want. ‘Try it, bairn, try it. It answers well.’” He was indeed mighty in prayer, and would take no denial.^[7] On this occasion he indulged in no expressions which seemed designed to propitiate Jehovah, nor did he usually. He knew that a path was opened to the mercyseat and consecrated to the believer; and he therefore approached the throne of grace without circumlocution, entering into the holiest place as one who had often been there; as one who knew that he had a standing invitation, (as he would have said,) and was always welcome. He never made long prayers, either “for a pretense,” or with a better motive; but followed the advice with which he would sometimes interrupt a long-winded brother in the prayer meeting, and “prayed short,” seldom exceeding five minutes, but in that time he had asked for great things, and the power of the Holy One had descended upon himself and upon the people.

I cannot recall the preacher's text at this distant time, but the lapse of memory is of no importance, as "Sammy's" text seldom returned to him after it went out from him, and his sermon was not adapted to remind his congregation that he had every selected one. The passage announced, his large features glowing with the warmth of love, he commenced thus: "Noo, friends, I'm not bown [going] to preach ye a sarmon: you mun [must] take it warm off 't backst'n. [8] I never but yance [once] made a sarmon in my life; an' then I cam into 't chapel as prood as the divel an' my sarmon could make me. At 't first step o't pulpit stairs away went text; upon second step 't introduction went; upon third step 't first heead were goon; upon fowrth step I lost 't second heead; an' afore I gat into, 't pulpit 't sarmon an' 't application were all goon. So I knelled doon, and prayed for marcy; and promised the Lord that if he'd pardon me that yance, I'd nivver mak another sarmon as lang as I lived. [Sammy had the reputation of having conscientiously kept that vow.] But bless ye, friends, I hev summut to tell ye.

Bless the Lord, I'm as happy as a king! The Lord's pardoned my sins; and he'll pardon yours, if you'll nubbut [only] repent and believe." And blending with them snatches of his own joyful experience, he launched out into faithful reproof, exhortation, and encouragement, with such unction from on high, and occasionally with such shrewdness and force, that the most volatile were overawed, and sinners trembled before the word of the Lord. At the conclusion of the service, a prayer-meeting was held, at which fruits of his ministry appeared.

Sammy Hick (for I can call him by no less familiar name – had any one addressed him as Mr. Hick, it is doubtful whether Sammy would have known that he was meant) had a careful wife, known as Matty: a woman of sound principle, who, while somewhat jealous of her husband's generosity, was always ready to contribute according to her ability when circumstances justified liberality. She kept a watchful eye upon his movements, and was sometimes a check upon his impulses, not only in the matter of giving, but also sometimes in other ways. Sammy betrayed this on one occasion, much to the amusement of those who heard him.

He was not often called upon to co-operate at missionary meetings, in which respect he differed very widely from another popular and eccentric local preacher -- "Billy Dawson, the Yorkshire farmer" a sketch of whom will be found in this volume. Herein, it must be acknowledged, the managers of those meetings exercised a wise discretion. Platform-speaking was not the department of labor in which our subject most shone, or felt most at home. He was a man of "one idea" -- his engrossing desire being the present salvation of every sinner within the sound of his voice, and to this phase of

"A yearning pity for mankind,
A burning charity,"

he sought to make everything subservient. Occasionally, however, he appeared upon the platform as the advocate of gospel missions to the heathen; and once in the city of York. The Rev. Richard Watson, then one of the missionary secretaries, attended the same meeting, with other popular divines. The chapel was crowded, and York audiences are proverbial for respectability and intelligence. It is believed that the committee having the management of the meeting had some misgivings about having invited Sammy, and the earlier to get rid of their anxiety arranged for him to speak first, after the reading of the report. He smiled when his name was announced, for he had a spark of innocent and pardonable vanity, and with a peculiar and ungraceful action, consequent upon not wearing suspenders, approached the front of the platform, and in a strong voice exclaimed, "Let us sing a bit;" giving out with his usual energy and breadth of dialect his favorite verse:

"This is the waah the prophets went,
The road that leads frae banishment;
The highwaah of holiness.
I'll goa, for all his paths are peace."

He struck the tune and sung the verse through almost before the congregation had recovered from their surprise at this novel mode of conducting a missionary meeting. His associates on the platform looked unutterable things at each other and Mr. Watson's countenance plainly indicated the shock which his fine taste and high sense of propriety had received. The stanza concluded, Sammy Hick, undaunted by the general amazement, commenced his speech by relating his religious experience -- "Bless the Lord! Glory be to God! I'se very happy. We're bown to have a good time, friends. I feel the fire burning in my heart,

“Praise God for what he’s done for me,
I yance was blind, but noo I see
I on the brink of ruin fell,
Glory to God I’se not in hell.”

He continued in this strain for a few minutes, much to the annoyance of Mr. Watson, who at length, left the platform to conceal his mortification. The “Village Blacksmith” was then unknown to him, but was, on better acquaintance, loved and honored by him. The people, however, understood Sammy. His earnest simplicity and the warm glow of his piety had its effect upon them, and soon there was the “shout of a king in the camp.”

This set the speaker on his high horse, and he plunged at once into the heart of the great subject he was expected to advocate, picturing in short but forcible sentences the misery of the heathen, who knew nothing of Christ and his precious salvation, and the duty of those who had experienced his saving grace, until throwing off all restraint he declared, with much feeling and equal simplicity, -- “Why, bless ye, friends, I’d gang [go] for a missionary to-morn [tomorrow] if it ‘d please God to remove t’ hindrance, but my old Matty weant let me, but may be” -- The remainder of the sentence was lost in a perfect outbreak of laughter, which disconcerted him a little and he turned to the chairman as though he would ask an explanation. The chairman himself, then mayor of the city, was in the midst of a smothered cachinnation, but he contrived to stammer out, “Go on, Sammy, go on,” whereupon the speaker resumed, without altering a muscle of his face or in any other way betraying the consciousness of having made any extraordinary revelation; and a good feeling was excited in that meeting which warmed many cold hearts, and promoted the spiritual welfare of the people as well as the pecuniary interests of the missionary cause; albeit the good man’s confession about the hindrance, coupled with Matty’s refusal to let him go, remained a standing joke at his expense. He meant to say nothing more than that the circumstance of having an aged and faithful wife dependent upon him was a reason why he should not go, but that if God should indicate his will, that Sammy should take his life in his hand and go forth to preach the gospel to the Gentiles by such a dispensation as the removal of Matty, no personal consideration would for a moment make him disobedient to the heavenly call. [9]

Many instances of overflowing kindness of heart and readiness to relieve the wants of others, without regard to cost or labor, are related of Samuel Hick. The following may be taken as a fair specimen. Calling upon his sister one day at Tadeaster, he said, “Thou hast a poor fire.” She returned, “We are not so near the pit as you.” He made no reply, went home, rose early the next morning, proceeded to the pit, loaded his cart, and before eight o’clock left a load of coals before his sister’s door, and returned home without looking into the house – being a distance of twenty miles there and back. The neighbors, as the coals lay undisturbed, said to her, “Why don’t you get your coals in?” She looked surprised, and could not be persuaded that she had any claim to them until she was informed that her brother had placed them there.

All untutored in the customs and fashions of the world as was the “Village Blacksmith,” no man was a more welcome guest among the wealthy and intelligent members of the Methodist societies, for he carried a blessing with him wherever he went. His ingenuousness and simplicity atoned for any lack of more fashionable qualifications. He was a living exemplification of the truth, -- “If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light.” His singleness of purpose saved him from restraint or awkwardness: rude he could not be; his heart was too full of gentleness and love. He yearned to teach others the way of salvation and to lead them in paths of righteousness. He would fain have imparted to all within his reach the perfect love which he enjoyed, and while he preached in the domestic circle as well as from the pulpit. Perhaps no man was more sensitive to the temperature of the spiritual atmosphere around him, and when he found it less fervid than his own he was promptly upon his knees, asking for a fresh infusion of the heavenly fire into that family.

Such was Samuel Hick, always rejoicing, yet always praying for larger blessings; always faithful in reproofing sin and lukewarmness, yet seldom giving offense by his fidelity, because it was always apparent that love for souls was his governing and only motive. He died as he lived, in the triumph of faith, and will shine in glory “as the stars for ever and ever,” for he “turned many to righteousness.” [10]

13 JOHN HANWELL

“He is so full of pleasing anecdote.”

“Devout, yet cheerful; pious, not austere;

To others lenient, to himself severe.”

This gentleman is probably known but to few on this side of the Atlantic. To those few, however, a sketch from one who knew and loved him well cannot be unwelcome; while others, being Methodists, will not object to these reminiscences of one who, moving in a more circumscribed orbit than some who have been introduced to their notice, is an acceptable minister of the New Testament, and a most worthy man -- “the friend of all, the enemy of none.” The language of kindness is ever on his lips and in his heart. His is a ministry of reconciliation in a lower as well as in a higher sense between man and his fellow, as well as between man and his Maker; He is a peacemaker. The reader is not, however, to suppose that this Mr. Hanwell’s only characteristic; or that because he is of a meek and peace-loving spirit, that therefore he is wanting in shrewdness, vivacity, and independence.

Far from it: Our subject possesses a considerable share of all these, with a keen perception of character, readily discerning a man’s weakness or foible, and promptly using that discernment to unmask or disconcert a hypocrite, or to reconcile those who are unhappily estranged. Moreover, the reverend gentleman is a wit, enjoys a pun exceedingly, can utter a sarcasm with effect, and possesses an inexhaustible fund of anecdote. His equal in this respect is not often to be met with; but goodness of heart is above all apparent.

Physically, Mr. Hanwell is a little man, not exceeding five feet in height; not exactly corpulent, but somewhat rotund in proportion to his longitude. It need scarcely be added that his “presence” inspires no awe; but the “man’s a man for a’ that,” and not exactly the person that a stranger would take liberties with. There lurks an indefinable something in the countenance – a mingling of humor and decision – which gives the man a character in advance; warning the beholder that he possesses weapons of defense, and has the skill and courage to use them when necessary; and that it would be difficult to unhorse him in an intellectual tournament.

The reverend gentleman possesses, in a commendable degree, the rare quality of knowing when to speak, and when to keep silence. He keeps his own counsel. He was stationed in Manchester during the existence of the trouble known as the “Warrenite disturbance,” (and in the same circuit with Dr. Warren,) and was so mute upon the exciting subject that he was half suspected, very unjustly, of sympathizing with, or at least conniving at, the radical movement. Nevertheless, he persevered in his course, extending his pastoral visits to the disaffected as well as to the loyal, and knowing nothing among them of the angry passions that were tearing other men’s bosoms. Among those whom he thus visited was a local preacher, a man of some talent and influence, and tolerably well to do in the world, the principal defect in whose character was a love of notoriety, and the credit of independence of thought and speech. His interests, and probably his private sentiments, were all incorporated with Wesleyan Methodism, but for the sake of being talked about he was ever boasting of his radicalism, while he took care not so to commit himself that discipline could be exercised upon him. Finding that Mr. Hanwell continued his pastoral visits, and that he cautiously kept silence upon the prevailing dispute, and sharing in the common mistake as to his real sentiments, the man grew bolder in his speech, until the visitor felt that, in this case at least, forbearance had ceased to be a virtue, and resolved upon a seasonable rebuke. Instead, however, of arguing the whole matter with him, which the discerning reader will perceive would have been useless, and would only have fed his vanity, our subject adopted a course which took the wind out of the would-be-radical’s sails, and left him with the uncomfortable conviction that his character was well understood. On entering the house, Mr. H. was met with the exclamation, evidently intended to elicit a commitment from him, “Why, Mr. Hanwell, I wonder you persist in coming to see such a radical as I am. You know I am a thorough Warrenite. What will the other preachers think of you?” Without taking the proffered seat, the man of God fixed his eye upon the speaker for a few moments, and then replied, “I know you, Mr. G____, and have known you from the beginning of this difficulty. That you wished to be thought a ‘radical’ I have always seen. I did hope that your religion would triumph over your vanity, and in this hope have continued my pastoral oversight. But you have so repeatedly avowed these sentiments that I must either doubt your word, or believe in your disaffection. Either alternative is painful, but the latter the less so, and I adopt it. I assume that all you have said against my brethren and Methodism you believe. As I cordially approve of both, my visits must be distasteful and unprofitable to you, and in sorrow I must bid you adieu. I can only pray that God may grant you another spirit.” With this counsel Mr. Hanwell left the house. Thenceforth his views were well understood, and his conscientious

forbearance from mingling in the strife rightly appreciated. The local preacher felt the force of the rebuke, and to some extent profited by the lesson.

Mr. Hanwell does not rank high as a preacher merely, though he always commands respectable appointments. On his first advent to a circuit his peculiarities prove highly attractive, but the matter of his sermons scarcely sustains him with equal 'eclat' to the end of a third year – the full measure a Methodist preacher's "continuance in one stay," which his admirable tact as a superintendent, his fidelity as a pastor, his amiable qualities as a man, and other excellences, usually secure for him. He is, to a considerable extent, a mechanical, and perhaps entirely a memoriter preacher, and possibly relies too much upon a stock of sermons. This is a conjecture only, based, however, upon some years of observation. His discourses are neat, exhibiting a knowledge of man's ordinary spiritual necessities rather than high intellectual powers, sound in their theology, and thoroughly experimental in their character. He loves most to dwell upon the consolations of the gospel, though sometimes he appears with good effect in the character of a Boanerges. He labors under some slight physical defect in utterance, which, by dint of application, he has overcome, but has been compelled to adopt a peculiar, measured delivery, which, from its necessary uniformity, becomes, in time, somewhat monotonous, although at first, from its very novelty, it is effective and even agreeable.

The reverend gentleman is careful to make the best use of his powers, and his habitual self-command and ready wit greatly aid him in this respect. He has some sermons of great power and acceptability. One, on the passage, "And David encouraged himself in the Lord his God," he rarely preaches without a request for its repetition. To the afflicted believer it is a "feast of fat things, of wine on the lees, well refined." Another, on the passage, "These light afflictions, which are but for a moment," &c., is indelibly imprinted upon my youthful memory. The following figure will probably remain familiar to me through life, as also the recollection of the preacher rising upon his toes and giving to it the fullest volume of his voice: "Methinks I see the venerable apostle of the Gentiles, with the balances of the sanctuary before him. Into one scale he puts 'afflictions,' and into the other 'glory.' Returning to the first he adds 'light afflictions,' and in the second he places 'weight of glory.' With a smile of inexpressible sweetness, he adds to the 'light afflictions,' even now only as the small dust of the balance, 'but for a moment,' and to the 'weight of glory,' that wondrous word 'eternity,' and the first scale flies higher still into the air. It is 'lighter than vanity.' Paul, Paul," then exclaimed the preacher, "stay thine hand; Jesus' suffering saints are satisfied! The 'weight of glory' is enough! The 'eternal' glory meets their largest desires! But no! The apostle of God has not completed the contrast. To that 'weight of glory' he adds that which is 'far 'more exceeding' as well as 'eternal;' the scale in which are 'these light afflictions, which are but for a moment,' is raised so high that the afflictions dwindle into nothing, while the eternal glory, brought near to the believer's faith, fills his afflicted soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory." The audience, catching the speaker's inspiration, would lift up their voices in one spontaneous burst hallelujahs, and henceforth go on their way rejoicing. Many of his sermons contain pictorial passages of this kind; passages so vividly representing an action or a scene as to remain fixed upon the memory for years. Encouraging the "burdened, sin-sick soul," to cast his care upon God, he would meet his doubts by exclaiming, "Say you that your burden is so heavy that you cannot carry it to the throne of God? Then, my brother, roll it into his presence, and say from thine heart,

'Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
Leave, ah! Leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me.'

God will touch it with his finger, and thou shalt be lightened of thy load." Mr. Hanwell entered the itinerant ministry in 1805, and in some of his earlier stations had to suffer for his work's sake. Probably his diminutive person exposed him to annoyances which would have scarcely been ventured upon in the case of one with more imposing physical attributes; for scoffers are generally cowards, and are arrogant and oppressive in proportion to the prospect of impunity.

From some of these annoyances his ready wit relieved him. Preaching once in one of the benighted rural villages of Yorkshire, a young man entered the room during the singing of the first hymn, evidently with the intention of creating a disturbance or interruption. To show his independence and disregard of divine worship, the stranger kept his hat on during the singing and prayer. Rising from his knees, and seeing the young man with his head still covered, Mr. Hanwell saw that a direct remonstrance would be unavailing – would, indeed, be the very course the young man desired and expected him to take, and would afford the opportunity for colloquy and interruption. He

therefore announced the page of the second hymn without appearing to notice the intruder, and then quietly observed, "There are in the world various denominations of Christians. Some denominations think it right to sing praises to God, as we do; others keep silence. Some think it most proper to pray to God in a standing, others in a kneeling, posture. There is only one denomination of Christians in the world who worship God with their hats on; they are called Quakers. They seldom come near our places of worship; there seems, however, to be one here tonight; there he is," he added, suddenly pointing with his finger to where the young man stood. Of course the irreverent youth immediately became the "observed of all observers," but being completely unprepared for this sudden introduction to his new associates, he yielded to the force of the sally and disappeared in a trice. The preacher smiled, and went on with the service.

The writer's acquaintance with Mr. Hanwell commenced while the reverend gentleman was stationed in the Barnsley circuit. During that appointment the celebrated Leeds secession on the organ question took place, and the disaffection spread to most of the circuits in Yorkshire, including Barnsley, where, however, the blended firmness, prudence, and forbearance of Mr. Hanwell prevented the evil from spreading beyond a very limited circle. When he was first stationed upon the circuit, the people had, by some means, acquired a habit of coming late to the house of God on Sunday morning; and as he was somewhat exact and systematic, this was a serious annoyance to him, even apart from the deadness of the spiritual affections which such a habit indicated. He resorted to several expedients – now preaching a short measure sermon before the lessons, and apprising the late comers that he did it for their sakes, preferring that they should lose the sermon rather than the word of God, and anon lecturing them severely both in private and from the pulpit still the evil continued, one family in particular invariably entering the house about half an hour after service commenced. Frequent expostulation having failed, he at length resolved upon a public rebuke, which he administered in the following caustic manner. The lady and gentleman occupied a large pew near the pulpit, at the end of the chapel furthest from the entrance. They were wealthy people, and the lady was usually attired in rustling silks, which attracted attention as she traveled the whole length of the aisle. Mr. Hanwell, on the occasion of the rebuke, was reading the second lesson, and had reached the middle of a verse, when the late comers entered. When they had proceeded so far that they could not well retreat, he suddenly stopped in the middle of a sentence -- "and unto them that look for " -- a pause ensued, without any falling of the voice; the eyes of the preacher, and of course the congregation also, were fixed upon the late comers, amid a death-like stillness, which made the rustling of the lady's dress trebly distinct; the lady and gentleman reached their seats, the preacher slightly inclined his head toward them, and proceeded with the reading at the exact point where he had broken off -- "him, shall he appear," &c., &c. There was no need of repeating the reproof; the irreverent practice of coming late into the house of God was cured; the example gave assurance that the reverend gentleman was resolved upon enforcing a due observance of decorum, and his way for the future was in that respect made plain and easy.

Few men are more happy and successful in addressing young children than is Mr. Hanwell; and all who have tried it know that this is a very difficult department of ministerial duty. A favorite method with him is to take up some important principle, embody it in a short, pithy sentence, such as the youngest child can easily remember, and bring to its illustration facts from Scripture history, reducing the phraseology to that colloquial form so captivating to children. Thus clothing a fact in simple language, concealing its source, and giving to it certain touches of modern every-day life, so as to keep up the interest of his hearers, he will at length call upon them to tell him of a parallel history, which the better informed will directly see is contained in some Bible narrative. Having obtained their answer, he will explain, with admirable tact and force, how it illustrates the principle with which he started; and then, drawing upon his large fund of anecdote, show that the same principle is enforced or discountenanced, as the case may be, in the history of the world subsequent to the era of revelation. I have seen the reverend gentleman often, while he was stationed in Manchester, surrounded, at the Whitsuntide festival, by a large congregation of children, who listened for a full hour, and sometimes longer, with eager and delighted attention to his familiar but instructive addresses. Sunday schools, and young people generally, always participate largely in his pastoral – it might be truly said paternal – care in the various circuits in which he travels; and he has his reward in the affection which everywhere greets his appearance.

A most pleasant companion, and a faithful, steadfast friend, is the Rev. John Hanwell, wherever he places his confidence, and finds no barrier to openhearted intercourse. Many a fatherly counsel has the writer received from him in early youth; many a pleasant journey taken with him to the "circuit places," in the days of approaching manhood; many an hour of social converse have we held under each other's roof in maturer life; many a sigh have

we mingled over the nearly deserted temple of God, when the church was riven by dissensions, and many an ardent hope have we breathed together as the cloud of discord was gradually dispelled; many a time has he cheered me by his words of kindness, and his happy, contented spirit, in hours of personal sorrow and affliction, and rejoiced with me in brighter days; -- and still he labors unweariedly in his hope and calling, looking for the recompense of his reward. He must now be approaching a ripe old age; and sweet and pleasant must be his retrospect of faithful and successful service in the cause of the Redeemer of men.

14 HODGSON CASSON

“The love of Christ doth me constrain
To seek the wand’ring souls of men;
With cries, entreaties, tears, to save,
To snatch them from the gaping grave.
“For this let men revile my name,
No cross I shun, I fear no shame;
All hail, reproach; and welcome, pain;
Only thy terrors, Lord, restrain.”
-- J. Wesley --

There are some eccentric men among the English Wesleyan preachers, as among those of other denominations; and assuredly the Rev. Hodgson Casson is one of these. Such men serve an important purpose in the army of them that preach the word, though sometimes their erratic course involves apparent confusion and disorder. They are not men whose examples are to be copied.

Eccentricity is at best dangerous in a minister of the gospel, even when it is innate, original, and unavoidable. Its possessor should ever check rather than foster it; but when it is cultivated, assumed, worn as a garment to catch the public eye, it involves moral obliquity; and for lack of the genius from which genuine eccentricity springs, is not less mischievous than contemptible. That the eccentricity of our present subject was born with him, and is inwoven with his very existence, does not admit of doubt; and to that eccentricity he owes the considerable popularity he enjoys, which, however, is mainly confined to the northern counties of England. Energetic, hardy, fearless of danger, and almost rash in braving it, indifferent to odium or ridicule, zealous in his Master’s cause, and full of compassion for souls, the whole of his earlier life was a succession of erratic movements, and daring sorties upon the enemy’s camp, often successful from their very suddenness and novelty; and if unsuccessful, exciting admiration by the zeal which prompted and the courage which executed them. As is often the case with men of his class, the years of his effective itinerancy were comparatively few. Although entering upon his labors so late as 1815, he has been for many years upon the superannuated list.

As has been intimated, Mr. Casson’s labors have been principally confined to the north of England.

While stationed at Gateshead and Newcastle, he devoted himself principally to the reformation and religious enlightenment of the numerous coal-heavers, bargemen, and sailors of that port. Two or three anecdotes will sufficiently illustrate the character of the man, and his mode of procedure.

Passing one of the low public-houses to be found in every seaport, he heard the sound of music, revelry, and dance, in an upper room; while on the first floor, or bar-room, a crowd of riotous “longshore men” were quarreling and brawling. Never pausing to think of the personal risk he encountered, he entered, pushed through the crowd below, ascended the rickety stairs, and soon stood in the center of the group of dancers. His gaunt but muscular form, clothed in black, immediately arrested attention. Without giving the revelers time to recover from their surprise, he exclaimed, with the full power of his stentorian lungs, “ There now, you have had dancing enough for awhile: let us pray. Down upon your knees, every man and woman of you.” The entire group seemed deprived of all power of resistance, (and this was no isolated instance of the kind;) the piping and the dancing ceased; soon Mr. Casson’s powerful voice was heard in prayer; strong cries and groans speedily followed from those who but a few moments before were whirling in the dance; the astonished landlord rushed up stairs, but fled affrighted when he beheld the scene; the drunken crowd below slunk away; and Mr. Casson remained the live-long night wrestling, praying, and

exhorting – ceasing not until many of his strange congregation had obtained mercy, and went to their homes new creatures in Christ Jesus.

On another occasion he was returning on foot from a country appointment, and when near his home heard a man utter an awful imprecation, calling down with an oath God's eternal vengeance upon his soul. In a moment Mr. Casson stood before him, and, proffering him two half-crowns, said, "Here, my man, I will give you five shillings if you will say that again, and 'amen' after it." The man did so, and took the promised reward. Mr. Casson passed on, entered his house, but took no food or sleep until he had wrestled for hours with God for that man's salvation; nor did he cease his intercession until he received an assurance that the desire of his soul should be granted. About a fortnight afterward, Mr. Casson was holding a lovefeast, when a man arose, under strong emotion, and told how, on a certain night, he was swearing, as was his habit, when a tall, black figure suddenly stood before him, and offered him five shillings to repeat the oath, with an "amen;" that he repeated it with the addition, and took the reward; went home, and told his wife of the circumstance; that she refused to receive the money; that it immediately flashed upon his mind that he had sold himself to the evil one; that he had never touched the money since, but torn with remorse, and wretched beyond endurance, he had wandered from place to place, seeking rest and finding none; and had begged admission into that meeting, hoping that the people would do something to ease his troubled conscience. In a moment Mr. Casson was upon his feet, the next moment upon his knees, and, joined by the congregation, he wrestled, and refused to be silenced, until the man's sins were forgiven, and his soul made to rejoice in the glorious liberty of God's children.

The intelligent, pious reader, will not fail to attribute the success of each of these bold measures to the singleness of purpose which dictated it, and the earnest prayer with which it was accompanied.

That was undoubtedly the grand secret. Similar instances, even more starting in their character, might be cited, were further elucidation of that phase of Mr. Casson's character necessary.

He often too experienced signal interpositions of divine Providence in his behalf; Jehovah not only protecting his servant from dangers to which his impetuous zeal exposed him, but sometimes making it apparent that his faithful minister was under his especial protection. It will excite no wonder that Mr. Casson's bold assaults upon the kingdom of darkness made him many enemies, and exposed him to the machinations of evil men, especially those who lived upon the follies and vices of the sin-pursuing throng. Once he was waylaid, when going to a country appointment, by two men, who had taken an oath to assassinate him as he passed a certain point on the road. When Mr. Casson reached the place, fear took hold upon them; and they allowed him to pass without executing their murderous purpose. They followed him to the village; turned into a public house, and, having fortified themselves with alcohol, the boldest of them repeated his oath, adding, that "as sure as he went out of that house alive, he would murder Hodgson Casson that night." After waiting in the house until they supposed Mr. Casson would be about returning, they arose to depart on their fiendish mission. The man who had renewed his oath fell upon the threshold of the house, and was taken up dead. This fact is well authenticated. The inference is easily drawn. The survivor, struck with alarm and remorse, confessed their mutual purpose. The village was notorious for its wickedness. Mr. Casson had often been mobbed and stoned there, but ever after, when indications of such treatment appeared, he would boldly march up to them, and stay their persecution by only saying, "Remember," mentioning the name of the man who died with a murder in his heart.

I never heard Mr. Casson during the palmy days of his notoriety, but presume that he was mainly indebted to his zeal and eccentricity for his popularity. Some seven or eight years ago, being then, as now, supernumerary at Birstal, he preached an occasional sermon in the neighborhood of Manchester, and I was induced to go and hear him. He was then emaciated and comparatively feeble.

The sermon was upon the whole common-place, enlivened now and then with some burlesque upon the frivolities of worldly minded and fashionable Christians, with also some hard hits at what he called "dandy preachers." "When Christ wanted preachers," said Mr. Casson, "he did not go into a fashionable drawing-room, and, scraping and bowing to some exquisite who was lounging upon a velvet sofa, offer him a 'living' in his church," with more to the same purport, which, however, was more amusing than edifying. Yet with this there was also some good sense, and the sermon was calculated to do good. It was clear that the fire of his genius no longer gave out the warmth of early days.

15 SAMUEL BARDSLEY

“An Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.”

The Rev. Samuel Bardsley (the “Dear Sammy,” to whom Mr. Wesley addressed many of his short, pithy letters) is about the earliest Wesleyan Methodist minister of whom the writer has any personal recollection. I was but a child when he visited my father’s house, yet well remember his great simplicity of speech and manners, his lisping accents, and his mammoth bulk; the latter being all the more indelibly fixed in my memory by the fact that he occupied a very capacious arm-chair, from which he extricated himself only with great difficulty. His name was familiar to the last generation of Wesleyan Methodists. He was much beloved, not because of his pulpit talents, for they were of no very brilliant order, but for his transparent simplicity of character and purpose, his unassuming manners and genuine Christian feeling. His peculiarities often provoked a smile, but his experimental piety hallowed the circle in which he moved, and won for him the affection of all who were inheritors of the like precious faith. Unlearned and guiltless of much arduous study, he was sound in doctrine and devoted to his pastoral and pulpit duties. He possessed the wisdom that cometh down from above, while his simplicity and ingenuousness were a shield from the shafts of the critic and the learned. Sometimes, on entering a circuit, he would be coolly received by the financial officers, and the more wealthy and intelligent part of the people; but he invariably bore down all opposition of this kind in a few weeks, by the combined influence of his personal character and his devotion to the work of God. In later life he became well aware of this; received the first indications of dissatisfaction with imperturbable good humor; smiled at the people’s fears, and frankly told them that their apprehensions would prove groundless; and would sometimes, indeed exhibit a shrewdness and tact, of which many would suppose him incapable.

At an official meeting, held shortly after his arrival in a certain circuit, it was intimated to him that he must expect to stay only one year. Designedly misinterpreting the speaker, Mr. Bardsley, with a lisp, which need not be imitated, replied, “True, brethren, my appointment is only for one year, but we shall be so happy together, that, at the end of it, you will wish me to stay a second, and, perhaps, the Conference will reappoint me. The second year will be equally happy, and, as we work together, the cause of God will prosper so much, that you will petition Conference to give me a third appointment, and I should not wonder if Conference granted your request. At the end of that time we must part, but you will be very sorry to lose me.” This put an extinguisher upon all further remonstrance. To say anything more would be to insult a man and a minister, whose piety and fidelity to his Master were unimpeachable. The result proved that “Sammy” was right. So “mightily grew the word of the Lord, and prevailed,” that his successive reappointments were earnestly solicited; and, at the end of the third year, the good man left an increased and prosperous society, amid universal regret and good-will. Mr. Bardsley was the Rev. Samuel Bradburn’s spiritual father; and Mr. Everett tells the following anecdote of the twain, who were, as was to be expected, endeared friends. Bradburn, who, with all his nobleness and generosity of character, had his eccentricities and infirmities, not the least of which was the indulgence in sallies of wit at the expense of others, had been playing rather too freely upon Mr. Bardsley, who at length remonstrated: “Come, come, Sammy,” said Mr. Bardsley, “recollect that though you have many brethren, you have but one father in the gospel.” In a moment, Bradburn started from his seat, threw his arms around the neck of Bardsley, and, with a gush of tears at the recollection of early days, tremulously, and with impassioned feeling, observed, while hanging upon him with the doting fondness of a child, “The Lord knows I love you in the gospel next to my Saviour.” Subsequently, the friends, each of them of liberal dimensions, were walking arm in arm in Sheffield, up a steep hill, in the burning heat of August, when they met a friend, and paused. Bradburn, wiping the perspiration from his forehead, remarked: “Here we are, the two babes of the wood,” obliquely glancing at Bardsley’s simplicity of character.

Mr. Bardsley lived to a great age, but never became superannuated. He died “in the harness,” an honor for which many of his brethren were wont to pray, for generally the preachers have a strong aversion to becoming supernumeraries. The Conference of 1818 appointed him to the Manchester circuit, where, if our memory is not at fault, he had once before labored. He was present at the Conference, but toward the latter part of the session was much debilitated. Yet he shrank not from duty, and, immediately after the close of the Conference, set out upon his journey to his appointed sphere, in company with his friend, Rev. Francis Wrigley. He found himself unable to bear

the fatigue of ordinary stage-coach traveling, and it was determined that the journey should be performed by post-chaise. This mode of traveling he endured with comparative comfort, until they reached Delph, a small manufacturing village on the main road between Huddersfield and Manchester. Here they resolved to rest for the night, Manchester being within a few hours' easy travel. Having taken tea, Mr. Bardsley sat some time at the door, enjoying the mild autumnal breeze, and appearing much refreshed. Ere long, however, he expressed a wish to retire to rest, and Mr. Wrigley assisted him up stairs, which he ascended without any unusual difficulty. On reaching the topmost stair he sat down, apparently exhausted. Resting his arm on Mr. Wrigley's shoulder, or around his neck, as though embracing him, he quietly said, "My dear, I must die," and immediately expired.

Sudden was the summons; but it was met with calmness and holy confidence. Emphatically, he "entered into rest." His remains were carried to Manchester, and were committed to the tomb in the town from which, just half a century before, he went forth, an ambassador of Jesus, to declare the acceptable year of the Lord, and to preach the knowledge of remission of sins through the forbearance of God. At the time of his decease, he was the oldest effective itinerant preacher in the Wesleyan Connection. The Rev. Joshua Marsden has thus beautifully recorded the circumstances of his death: --

"Traveling through our vale of strife,
with the weight of years opprest,
Bardsley slipp'd away to life,
In the sinless realms of rest;
Jesus welcomes with a smile,
Owns his aged servant dear;
Fifty years of holy toil
Crowns with heaven's eternal year.

17 THOMAS HARRISON WALKER

" -- , gifted, noble, ardent, kind."

The publication, in this country, of a volume from the pen of this gentleman, entitled a "Companion for the Afflicted," which the Rev. Dr. Peck, in an introductory page, fitly characterizes as "precious," naturally suggests his introduction to the reader of these sketches. The book is comparatively a recent production, and is a fair criterion by which to judge of the author's ministerial talents. There have been circumstances in his personal history peculiarly adapted to call forth his strongest sympathies with those who are called to pass through great tribulation, and to lead him to meditate frequently upon those mysterious dispensations of the divine government which ever and anon cast a temporary gloom over the Christian's path.

Rightly to counsel the afflicted is a more difficult task than many suppose. It involves nice and delicate points. The indiscriminate application of Scripture promises is rarely safe; it is never satisfactory to an intelligent and reflecting mind. Those promises are all conditional; they presuppose certain constituents of character. Christians are often more eager to claim a divine promise than they are to inquire into the justice of their claim. Christian fidelity is a high virtue, and has reference to the thoughts and intentions of the heart – the secret chambers of imagery – as well as to the outward actions and the performance of prescribed duties. For want of self-examination many fail to discover in their afflictions the chastisement of their infidelities, and our heavenly Father has to inflict stroke upon stroke before we are willing to retire into our closets to inquire what he means and wherefore we are chastened.

Hence the pastor of God's people should be diligent and careful in the interpretation of afflictive dispensations. He must neither too hastily pour in consolation, nor needlessly keep open the wound.

He must discriminate between what, in the moral government of the Most High, is permitted and what appointed; between what is general and what specific; what the certain effect of known causes, and what superior or contrary thereto. He should exercise a wise care to promote the design of the chastisement, even though it be necessary to probe deeply the wounds which already quiver at the slightest touch; and there should be, in no less degree, a skillful and prompt application, where justifiable, of the healing balm – those exceeding great and precious

promises which are the heritage of God's faithful people when afflicted in mind, body, or estate. But above all, he is most competent to "comfort those that mourn" who has an experimental knowledge both of the sorrows of tribulation and their antidote. One severe trial, sanctified to the sufferer and received with self-examination, will often give, more than volumes of theology and years of study, a key to the whole subject. The counsels of one thus qualified, oral or written, are profitable to those who are "chastened of the Lord;" he becomes in all the fullness of the language a "companion for the afflicted." Such a man is the Rev. T. H. Walker. Gifted with superior intellect, a diligent and extensive reader, a close student of human character, and a careful observer – with a nature susceptible of the kindest sympathies – always chaste in expression and often truly eloquent; preserving the dignity of the ministerial character while he cheerfully performs its minutest duties; he was regarded in his best days as a model of a Christian pastor, and commanded the best circuits. More recently he has had less prominent stations. As a preacher few men can so irresistibly elevate his hearers to a high standard both of faith and practice, without in the least degree bordering on enthusiasm or eccentricity. Carefully laying down his principles in the former part of his discourse, he will, toward its conclusion, glowingly expatiate upon the principal theme, securing the assent of the judgments of his hearers while he excites the most hallowed emotions with their hearts. In the conduct of prayer meetings he is eminently successful, especially in addressing and encouraging the penitent and broken-hearted. To the young he is both pastor and friend.

Some ten years ago Mr. Walker's personal appearance was pleasing and imposing. He is about five feet eleven inches in height, rather spare than fleshy, hair of raven blackness, a fine eye, a patch of color upon the cheek, closely resembling a hectic flush, especially when excited with preaching, and of very gentlemanly manners and address. Probably the lapse of years, with other circumstances, has wrought a considerable change in his outward man since the writer had the privilege of sitting under his ministry.

18 ADAM CLARKE

"So then, humbly with his God, and proudly independent of his fellows, walketh in pleasures multitudinous, the man ennobled by his pen; He hath built up, glorious architect, a monument more durable than brass, His children's children shall talk of him in love, and teach their sons his honor His dignity hath set him among princes, the universe is debtor to his worth; His privilege is blessing for ever; his happiness shineth now, For he standeth of that grand election, each man one among a thousand, Whose sound is gone out into all lands and their words to the end of the world." -- Proverbial Philosophy --

The Rev. Dr. Clarke, when I first saw him, struck me forcibly, and no less favorably, by his benevolent aspect, his hair, white with age, was thrown from his forehead and temples; his complexion was ruddy; his step, for his years, firm and elastic his entire appearance indicative of health; his person of and inclining to corpulency; and his features bland, denoting openness and frankness. He was dressed much in the style of an English country gentleman – top-boots, drab breeches, blue coat, with covered or silk buttons, pale buff vest, drab hat, and snow-white neckcloth – and had the air of one accustomed to the best society.

Every Methodist is probably aware that Dr. Clarke was of Irish birth, being a native of Moybeg, an inconsiderable town in the county of Londonderry. This could scarcely be known from his conversation, the peculiar but rich and not unusual brogue of his country having probably been lost in the acquisition of other languages, especially as he left Ireland while yet a mere youth. But perhaps his Hibernian origin might be traced in the pleasant egotism which was sometimes apparent in his character, some amusing instances of which may be found in the Autobiography which forms the first volume of the Memoirs published by his family, and occasionally, though more rarely, in his journal and familiar correspondence. This was, it might almost be said, the only failing of this great man; the opaque spot upon a character of unsurpassed luster and transparency. Even this weakness was more diverting than baneful. It sometimes excited a smile, but never awakened disrespect. It was a simplicity of candor which indicated honesty far more than it did vanity or self-complacency, and was the antipodes of parade or assumption of superiority; of these Dr. Clarke could never be rightfully accused. His godly sincerity and fervent piety always outshone his scholastic attainments, and his Christian principles saved him from the spirit which too often accompanies such elevation among men as that to which he attained. His freedom of speech respecting himself

partook of that openness, mutual confidence, and unrestrained pleasantry, which private intercourse among Englishmen permits and justifies; albeit with a bias in the direction already mentioned.

There was a native nobility in the character of Dr. Clarke. He was above dissimulation or concealment of his sentiments, and avowed them with frankness when circumstances seemed to require it. Conscious of his sincerity and uprightness, he did not in his ordinary conversation pause to consider what construction others would or could put upon his words. And in this he showed true greatness. It is ever an indication of littleness of mind, a very small amount of self-reliance – to be over solicitous about the opinions of others, or to be craving after public approbation – to be fearful lest our slightest expression should be misconstrued or unappreciated. Such a disposition betrays a consciousness of merely superficial attainment, and betokens the absence of that strength of character and rectitude of principle upon which the truly great can fall back and peacefully recline amid any amount of misrepresentation of either words or actions. To such littleness the subject of this sketch was an entire stranger, and perhaps carried his frankness to an excess, as many lesser men do their circumspection. Indeed upon a review of Dr. Clarke's "rise and progress," it would have been marvelous if he did not sometimes signify a consciousness of the distinctions which had been heaped upon him, never beyond his deserts; and it was a triumph of divine grace that the honors gathered from the church and the world, in such merited profusion, marred not the harmony and simplicity of his character. Thrice was he, by the unsought suffrages of his brethren, elected to the highest office in their gift – the presidency of the Conference – a distinction which in his day no other preacher attained. Among the people, his earnest, experimental preaching, and his numerous theological writings, had secured to him a universal popularity. His learned and invaluable Commentary had established among all other religious denominations, among learned men generally, his high reputation as a scholar. His acquaintance was courted by the savans of Europe; a prince of the House of Brunswick (the Duke of Sussex) delighted to associate with him; the British and Foreign Bible Society openly acknowledged their indebtedness to him, not only for counsel and aid in the matter of translating the Scriptures into the oriental languages, but in devising and casting model founts of oriental type; the British government, against the repeated expression of his wishes, retained for ten years his services in deciphering and arranging its ancient manuscripts, and frankly expressed its indebtedness to him by placing upon its imperishable records a memorial of his "extensive learning and indefatigable industry;" yet he still remained, as in the days of his youth, a Methodist preacher, in spirit in labors, in accentuality, and in usefulness; one with his brethren in ardent attachment to the principles and economy of Wesleyan Methodism, as handed down to them by its founder, and so wonderfully owned of God as a means for the world's salvation; -- its fearless advocate, and its able defender.

Ten years subsequent to the time referred to at the commencement of this sketch, the writer next saw and heard Dr. Clarke in the pulpit of Brunswick Chapel, Leeds. He was then more clerically attired, his dress being such as is generally worn by his associates in the ministry. He preached twice on that day in behalf of the trust-funds of the chapel, which was densely crowded. The two collections, taken up in the usual way in boxes or plates, amounted to about two hundred and fifty pounds sterling. I remember feeling some disappointment under the morning sermon, especially in the former part, in view of the preacher's high reputation for learning; but this feeling subsided toward the close, borne down by the torrent of evangelical truth by which the discourse was distinguished. As the doctor approached the conclusion of the sermon, and gathered into one rich cluster the vast truths which his arguments had unfolded in the former parts, his face glowed with deep feeling, and after dwelling for a moment upon their vast importance, he swept his hand across the space before him, as a farmer would in sowing grain broadcast, and exclaimed, with great energy, "There, take these glorious truths among you – make the most of them for your personal salvation and comfort; they are truths, I will vouch for them – for that I will stake my reputation for intellect and common sense; and if they hung but by a single hair of this gray head, (pointing to his snowy locks,) that single hair would be found so firmly united to the throne of the Redeemer, that all the malignity of hell and the sophistry of the world might be defied to cut it in two." The effect of this, but feebly given from memory, was magical. A burst of joy broke from the auditory, which showed that they had made – the application of his subject which he desired. The evening sermon ^[14] was a still richer feast. The doctor caught fire at an expression in the second hymn, and the sermon was full of the unction of the Holy One.

No just opinion of Dr. Clarke as a preacher can be formed from his published sermons. This will be conceded by all who have heard him preach, and read his printed discourses. In the pulpit he labored to effect present good; through the press he spoke to future generations, and probably considered that while the majority of those who attended upon his ministry were unlearned, a fair proportion of those who bought and read published sermons were

accustomed to reflect, were capable of pursuing and comprehending more elaborate arguments, and could appreciate the additional aids furnished by learning and science. He would not introduce his erudition where it might prove an impediment, rather than an auxiliary, to the great work which lay near his heart; neither would he conceal it where there was a possibility of its promoting the cause of religion and truth. In this he copied the model for all Christian ministers – the great apostle to the Gentiles – whose vast acquirements in Jewish literature rarely appeared, except in the richness of his exhibitions of gospel privileges. His learning constituted the deep and broad foundation of that pillar which, in the person of the apostle, was set for the defense of the truth, and not the ornament of its capital; ministering to its strength, rather than to its decoration.

In his style or method of preaching Dr. Clarke greatly differed from most of his brethren. His was preaching, as distinguished on the one hand from mere sermonizing, altogether too popular in the present day; and on the other hand from mere exposition, in which so few excel, and in which none can excel without close and critical study of the Holy Scriptures. An occasional hearer, unless more than ordinarily intelligent and attentive, would perhaps think him negligent of plan or outline, as he rarely announced his divisions and subdivisions. But the entire plan existed in his own mind, and sometimes, at the conclusion of a discourse, he would recapitulate the main points, so as to show the harmony of all he had said. And the observant hearer would note, that through the whole discourse the plan was unfolded by degrees in the execution of all the parts – an aim was apparent all the way through. As Mr. Everett observes: “In cases where order was the least perceptible, the fine flow of thought and of feeling in which he indulged was invariably taking within its vast and sweeping motion whatever of the useful came in its way in its course to the ocean of eternity; whither he was always, after due preparation here, conducting his hearers. Numerous as might be the windings of an argument through which he conducted his auditors, it was still, like the same stream, working out its own natural bed amidst the mountains and over the plains, coming, as it were, from the heights of the understanding, and finally setting down into the heart, in fixed and steady purpose.” The common-place plan of “three heads, and a conclusion,” was his aversion. There was the warmth of life in every discourse he delivered. The whole Bible was his book, and what ever text he might select, the light of the volume beamed through it. His favorite method was to take up some broad, general truths – to dwell upon the harmony of divine revelation, and the fullness of the divine economy of grace – and then to mete them out to his hearers in all their adaptation to human necessities, and the Christian’s comfort.

It must not be supposed that he neglected previous preparation, over and above the great stores which were accumulated in his extensive reading. His sermons were carefully studied, but more in the thoughts than in the words; the phraseology, and the extent of range to be taken, depended upon the influence which he might receive from on high. ^[15] His action was not in any way remarkable; it was natural, at times not peculiarly graceful, but generally appropriate, and rarely otherwise than chaste. His voice was strong and clear, rather monotonous in the more argumentative portions of his sermon, but capable of very effective outbreaks toward the close.

In personal character few men have exhibited more that was lovely and of good report than Dr.

Clarke. Benevolence and magnanimity were his prominent characteristics. His kindness of heart displayed itself not less in the minor courtesies of social life than in the fulfillment of more important duties; it was his nature, confirmed and elevated by the voluntary adoption of that noblest maxim, “Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you.” Many instances of this, in themselves perhaps trifles, but as illustrative of an important principle, are within the writer’s knowledge, one of which may be mentioned here. Once, when preaching in a large manufacturing town in Yorkshire, and staying at the house of a wealthy member of the society, the preachers on the circuit, their families, and other friends, were invited to sup with him. An Englishman loves his supper, albeit it is the fourth meal of the day, and Methodist preachers no less than others, especially after preaching three times, walking perhaps six or eight miles, and comparatively fasting all day. Then the anxieties of the day are over, the mind relaxes from its rigid tension into grateful cheerfulness, the home associations of the man, the husband and the father, resume their influence, after being kept in abeyance by the onerous sense of ministerial duty and responsibility, and, whether at home or abroad, he unbends – unharnesses, so to speak. In the society of English Methodist preachers, under such circumstances, the writer has spent some of the most profitable and delightful hours of his life.

But to return. Among the edibles were roasted potatoes – a favorite method of cooking this vegetable across the water, where they have of finer quality than we have – one of which a young lady, who sat next to Dr. Clarke’s cut

with a knife, the cold blade of which, by condensing the steam, immediately made the vegetable sad and watery. This caught the doctor's eye, and with parental kindness he spoke aside to the young lady: "Stay, my dear, lay that aside. I am an Irishman; let me show you how to treat my country's fruit. As the skin is never eaten, you need feel no hesitation about taking a roasted potato in your fingers, thus," breaking one in twain, and pressing out the flour-like contents of the "jacket" upon his plate. I have often heard the lady say, that this was done with so much paternal urbanity, that the doctor's manner won from her an almost filial confidence and love, trifling as was the circumstance in itself.

To the young he was always benignant, and over their peace and welfare ever watchful. This disposition showed itself, where it ever should be most manifest, in the bosom of his family, where he was indeed deeply beloved. Never, perhaps, was parent more esteemed and venerated, while his children found in his unvarying kindness the aliment and object of tenderest and most confiding affection. Amid his numerous engagements, and the eagerness with which his society was sought by the great and learned, home was to him the only earthly paradise – the haven of rest – the ark to which he was ever anxious to return

"The spot of earth supremely blest,
A dearer, sweeter spot, than all the rest."

The oriental scholar and learned commentator, the companion of savans and of princes, was still more the loving husband, the tender father, the faithful guardian, and the cheerful, even playful, associate of his children. Of "sighs that speak a father's woe" he had but little experience, because he made it his first concern to rule well his own household; to go in and out before his children as the servant and minister of Christ; to regulate all his domestic intercourse with reference to its influence upon their highest interests; to win their confidence by his own integrity candor, and affectionate demeanor; and in all things, by example and by counsel, to train them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In fine, though he could not impart to them saving grace, he showed them daily its blessed effects in his own life and conversation; by living as a Christian, he "lured to heaven, and led the way," praying often with and for his children, that they might follow him as he followed Christ. When parents thus strive in all things, small as well as great, for the salvation of their children, God is never slack concerning his promises; and Dr. Clarke, long before his death, saw all his children walking in the commandments of the Lord.

Indeed, those who knew not Dr. Clarke in his more private relations – as the head of a family, and as a pastor, guide, counselor, and friend – were ignorant of the true worth and greatness of his character. It was in these relations that the man and the Christian shone with that holiest radiance, that clear luster, which none could misunderstand; here his generosity and benevolence flowed in a constant current, unobserved and seeking not observation. Here the hallowed principle of charity was inculcated – here its promptings were unostentatiously indulged. Now, in a season of national scarcity, when the subject of our sketch was yet poor in this world's goods, and his young family and truly Christian wife suffered in common with others, he might be seen at the frugal board, gathering together his little ones, "talking to them on the subject, showing them their starving fellow creatures who in cold, nakedness, and famine, besought relief," until their hearts were affected, and "each would put by a portion of its breakfast or supper for these distressed poor; at its distribution they were all present, and were thus taught to see and feel the blessings of self-denial in the happiness it produced to others." Or when far away on his journeys, oppressed with labors and sickness, making daily mention in his letters of those who were recipients of his bounty, and giving to Mrs. Clarke, his willing co-worker in all Christian labor, such instructions as, "I know you will not let poor Mrs.

Fox be neglected; while she lives send her one thing, with my blessing, every day." From the conversation of those who knew him well, and from his published Memoirs and correspondence, such proofs of his generosity and Christian benevolence might be multiplied to almost any extent.

Let these allusions to those distinguishing traits in the character of Dr. Clarke suffice, and let us next look at the same man moving in another sphere.

It is but too common for those who first had "the gospel preached to them," to imagine that its privileges are confined to their own class, and that the titled and wealthy are all unbelievers and wicked, and given up to work iniquity with greediness. I strongly suspect that a good deal of uncharitableness of this kind will meet with its rebuke at the day of judgment. It is still more common for the poor to associate pride and haughtiness of demeanor with elevated station.

Demagogues and discontented men, who would be dissatisfied with any condition of society while there remained a Mordecai sitting in the gate who refused obeisance to them, and who for unworthy ends seek popular favor, foster this censorious spirit, and have so long united, in their denunciations, "aristocracy" and imperious pride, that the unreflecting multitude deem the two inseparable and synonymous; and too many good men have so often used the word in this offensive sense, which is at variance with its original meaning, that they have, perhaps unintentionally, increased the popular uncharitableness. The true "aristocracy" of every nation are those who wield extensive influence, and fill high stations, derived from parentage, wisdom, piety, valor, or property. To be aristocratic is not necessarily to be imperious, oppressive, or unapproachable. Strictly speaking, the reverse is the fact; it is only those who assume to be aristocratic that have brought disgrace upon the term; and the distinction should be borne in mind, if we would do justice to all men.

Allusion has already been made to the friendship of the Duke of Sussex for Dr. Clarke – a friendship honorable alike to both parties; because on the one side freely, and cordially; and openly bestowed; and, on the other, enjoyed without the least diminution of personal independence or Christian dignity. Amid the temptations and allurements of his high position, the Duke of Sussex preserved, not only an untainted moral character, but a Christian deportment worthy of many who make higher and bolder profession; while his love of learning and his urbanity of disposition led him to associate with good and learned men without distinction of creed or rank. He whose society was courted by the highest of the realm corresponded with the Methodist preacher, (for that office Dr.

Clarke never laid aside,) received him familiarly at his own table, and returned the visits at the doctor's house. Indeed, I suspect there was that in the reverend gentleman's intercourse with his illustrious friend which plainly indicated that the visiting must not be all on one side; that he would not dance attendance merely for the honor of the thing; and that, though he affected no social equality, he was not inclined to forget that self-respect which commands respect from others, however superior in worldly rank and associations. Nor can it be doubted that the duke cheerfully conceded this tribute to the worth of him whose friendship he had himself sought. For all that relates to this intercourse I am, of course, indebted to the "Memoir" before alluded to. An invitation had been given to the doctor by the duke, through his private secretary, requesting him to call upon him whenever he visited London, when he would "show him his library, and he most happy to make the acquaintance of a man of whose talents and character he had formed so exalted an opinion." This was in February, 1822; in May of the same year the doctor was in London, preaching at the missionary anniversaries, and as in courtesy bound, wrote a note to the duke's secretary simply saying that he was in town, leaving the renewal of the invitation perfectly optional with his royal highness. In the course of the same day a special invitation was sent for him to dine with the duke the next day at Kensington Palace. The sequel I will give in Dr. Clarke's own words "I went, and was received by his royal highness in his closet, and was led by himself through his library, where he showed me several curious things, and condescended to ask me several biographical questions, desiring his librarian from time to time to note the answers down as 'curious and important.' The dinner came – the company was select: his royal highness, Dr. Parr, the highest Greek scholar in Europe, Sir Anthony Carlisle, the Rev. T. Maurice, of the British Museum, the honorable _____ Gower, the honorable Colonel Wildman, Sir Alexander Johnstone, Lord Blessington, T. J. Pettigrew, Esq., and Adam Clarke. We sat down about seven o'clock, and dinner was over about half-past nine; after which the tables were drawn, and all retired to the pavilion, where tea and coffee were served about eleven. At dinner I was pledged by his royal highness, Dr. Parr, Colonel Wildman, and others, and managed so well, having made the honorable _____ Gower, who sat at the foot of the table, my confidant, as not to drink more than two glasses of wine, though the bottles went round many times. I wished much to get away, though the conversation was unique, curious, and instructive, fearing your mother would be uneasy respecting my safety.

"I was informed I must remain till all the company had departed, which was about twelve o'clock.

When they were all gone, the duke sat down on his sofa, and beckoned me to come and sit down beside him, on his right hand; and he entered for a considerable time into a most familiar conversation with me. At last a servant in the royal livery came to me, saying, 'Sir, the carriage is in waiting.' I rose up, and his royal highness rose at the same time, took me affectionately by the hand, told me I must come and visit him some morning when he was alone, which time should be arranged between me and his secretary; bade me a friendly 'Good night;' and I was then conducted, by the servant, to the door of the palace; when, lo and behold, one of the royal carriages was in waiting, to carry a Methodist preacher, your old weather-beaten father, to his own lodgings." In November of the same year,

the doctor forwarded to the Duke of Sussex certain portions of his Commentary, with a long letter descriptive of his design in its publication, and his labors in its preparation. To this the duke replied at some length, the whole letter being in his own handwriting.

In it are sentiments so worthy of a prince, and so illustrative of the position taken in my first allusion to the subject, that I cannot forbear making a few extracts. After informing his correspondent that his “precious work is already carefully placed in his library,” he says: “It is with the Almighty alone, who knoweth the hearts and most inward thoughts of every one of his creatures, to recompense with everlasting grace your great exertions and activity in expounding and publishing the divine truths to the world at large I feel most thankful to you for having selected me as a witness of your diligence, assiduity, and perseverance, in this godlike work, by the presentation to me of a copy of your voluminous work – the produce of the fruits of your industry. This kind distinction, believe me, is not thrown away upon one who is either insensible to the compliment, or ignorant of the value of the gift; and most faithfully do I promise to read, consult, and meditate upon, your faithful, luminous, and elaborate explanations of the sacred book. As far as I have presumed to dive into, and to occupy myself with, the holy volumes, I feel satisfied of their divine origin and truth; and that they contain likewise more matters than any one, and myself in particular, can ever aspire fully to understand.

This belief ought, however, in no wise to slacken our diligence, or damp our ardor in attempting a constant research after the attainment of knowledge and of truth, as we may flatter ourselves, although unable to reach the goal, still to approach much nearer to its portals; which, of itself, is a great blessing, as I am convinced that, if we only follow strictly the rules and regulations contained in the Scriptures for the guidance of our conduct in this world, we may present ourselves (although aware of our own unworthiness) before the divine throne with a confident hope of forgiveness, from the knowledge we acquire therein of His mercy to all truly penitent sinners.

“These objects, besides many others which seem to have occupied the greatest and most valuable part of your active life, cannot fail of being most interesting to the historian, the theologian, the legislator, and the philosopher: from all these details the mind will undoubtedly derive rich sources of information wherewith to make researches, and thence to ground deductions. To these I shall assiduously apply myself when retired in my closet; and, as my heart and mind improve, I shall feel my debt of gratitude toward you daily increasing, an obligation I shall ever be proud to own; and with which sentiment I have the pleasure to conclude, signing myself, dear sir, your sincerely obliged and truly devoted,

Augustus Frederick.

“Bognor, Dec. 24, 1822.”

On several other occasions Dr. Clarke visited the duke, and it is pleasant to observe the growing familiarity between them. The second visit was by special invitation to meet the Duke of Hamilton, and he was requested to bring his son (John W. Clarke) with him. This he did. So soon as they entered the pavilion, the host singled him out, took him by the hand, and introduced him to two East India gentlemen as his “friend, Dr. Adam Clarke, who would speak Persic or Arabic with any of them.” The doctor immediately adds, (in the letter to Mrs. C., and it confirms what has been said about his exacting in this intercourse the respect and courtesy which he showed,) “I turned, and taking John by the arm, said, ‘May it please your royal highness, I have the honor of presenting to you my eldest son;’ he took him by the hand, and bade him welcome, and on the arrival of any new guest introduced both myself and our son.” Another visit he thus describes, and with this extract I pass over these interesting scenes in his life: “The duke came again to me and said, ‘Dr. Clarke, do you know the Archbishop of Canterbury?’ ‘No, sir.’ ‘Come with me, and I will introduce you to him.’ He took me by the arm, and led me through the crowd – we came to the archbishop. The duke said, ‘Here, my lord, I have the pleasure of introducing to your grace, my friend Dr. Adam Clarke.’ I bowed, so did his grace, and immediately held out his hand: he said, ‘Dr. Clarke, I am glad to see you; I know you well by character, and have often received instruction from your writings.’ That over, the duke took me through the crowd, and introduced me to the Bishop of Chichester, who talked with me for a quarter of an hour, till up came the Bishop of London, who shook my hand, and inquired after my health. Soon after the duke took hold of my arm, and begged to introduce me to some of the foreign ministers, lords, chief functionaries, learned foreigners, &c. After a great many to’s and fro’s, the duke, addressing me with great affection, said, (scores being all around us,) ‘Dr. Clarke, I am very glad to see you.’ His royal highness told me that Ram mohun Row would be here this night, and he would introduce me to him. I bowed: and then it was about twenty minutes after ten, and I was

determined not to stay late; I therefore slipped off; and met Ram mohun Row as I came down the steps; but I passed on to look for my gig. When I came into the ante-room for my hat, one of the gentlemen in waiting came from up stairs, -- 'Sir, the duke has been calling for you.' I said, 'I am just setting off.' He said, 'The duke has been calling twice for you.' I ran up stairs, my hat in my hand, and my colored handkerchief about my neck, and entered the large saloon; the duke spied me in a moment caught me by the hand, led me to Ram mohun Row, and introduced me. As soon as this was over, I slipped out, and away went your father from a place where he had received the highest honor."

The great work by which Dr. Clarke will be known to the latest time – his Commentary on the Holy Scripture was commenced while he was in the Liverpool circuit, in 1795. It was finished in 1826, on the anniversary of his wedding day. After more than thirty years' toil and anxiety it may well be imagined that he rejoiced with exceeding joy at the completion of his task. His manner of expressing that joy was highly characteristic of our subject, who never lost an opportunity of making his wife and children participators of his happiness. There were other circumstances connected with this event which reveal the noble feelings of the patriarch sire and his affectionate and happy family.

On the afternoon on which the Commentary was finished, Dr. Clarke entered the parlor, and without speaking to any other member of the family, beckoned his youngest son, Joseph, into the hall, and desired him to accompany him to his study. Without any suspicion of what revelation was about to be made, the son followed, and great indeed was his astonishment when his father pointed to his large study table, and the stand, cleared of their folios, &c. and nothing remaining on either but his study Bible. "This, Joseph," said he, "is the happiest period I have enjoyed for many years; I have put the last hand to my Comment; I have written the last word of the work; I have put away the chains that would remind me of my bondage, and there (pointing to the steps of his library ladder) have I returned the deep thanks of a grateful soul to the God who has shown me such great and continued kindness; I shall now go into the parlor, tell my good news to the rest, and enjoy myself for the rest of the day. ^[16] Soon afterward, his sons, daughters, and sons-in-law, resolved to present him with a silver vase as a memorial of the completion of a work which they had seen him so long, laboriously, and anxiously prosecuting; but the design was kept secret from their father. When it was to be presented, the two eldest sons invited their parents and the whole family to dine with them, and after dinner the proposed offering, covered from the sight, was introduced, and placed at the head of the table. Dr. Clarke's eldest son then rose, and in the name of each and all of the family uncovered and offered it, with a suitable address, to their honored and revered father. "For a few moments," says the biographer, "he sat incapable of utterance; then regarding them all, he rose, spread his hands over this token of his children's love, and pronounced his blessing upon them individually and collectively. His eldest son then filled the vessel with wine, which his father raised first to his own lips, then to those of his beloved wife, and afterward bore it to each of the family; he then put it down, and in a strain of the most heartfelt, eloquent tenderness, addressed his children in the name of their revered mother and himself in terms which they will never forget." Those only who knew Dr. Clarke can conceive how his heart would overflow on such an occasion.

I should give but an imperfect sketch of this great man were I to omit a reference to his conversational powers, which were of a high order. He never talked, any more than he preached, for display. His topics were diversified, and he was exceedingly happy at adapting his converse to the company he was in. For the young, as has been before intimated, he had always a rich fund of anecdote and wise counsel, illustrated by incidents in his own varied life; for the poor, encouragement; for the wealthy, incentives to benevolence; and for all Christians, sayings seasoned with personal experience, and a deep insight into the things of God. Among his literary acquaintances he was always at ease, as able to teach as to learn, but as willing to learn as to teach; while in his family, when the hours of study were over and his engagements permitted his spending the evening at home, one member would read while he explained and commented for their instruction. He knew no idle hours, and was engaged in all places doing his Master's work, in the instruction and improvement of others; and yet so social were his habits, so kind and pleasing his manners, that none wearied of his counsels, and only knew that they had been listening to a teacher by the good results which, on reflection, they were conscious had attended his counsels.

At the Conference of 1831, Dr. Clarke, contrary to his own expressed wish, was placed upon the list of supernumeraries; and he appears to have felt this keenly. Why this was done was never well understood by those out of the Conference. Whether in the fact that the doctor having shown a preference for a fixed and private

residence, instead of occupying the house which the circuit provided for the preacher, the Conference saw an encroachment upon the itinerant system over which they are wisely jealous, and thought it best to close any avenue in that direction, I am not well informed. It is probable that some such feeling was at the bottom of the action of the Conference.

I believe no other Wesleyan Methodist traveling preacher than Dr. Clarke ever, during his itinerancy, possessed a farm or held real estate. They are not allowed such a privilege, and perhaps the exception, permitted in his case for a few years, was working dissatisfaction among those who, having the means to purchase, were still required to sing with literal truth --

“No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in the wilderness.”

It is certain that the doctor was by no means superannuated, as his abundant and acceptable labors in almost every part of the United Kingdom and in the Shetland Isles, subsequent to his retirement from the regular itinerancy, abundantly testified.

A career of usefulness and honor was Dr. Clarke's, nearly half a century of which was spent in preaching the gospel. Many marveled how he could write so much – for his publications, in addition to his Commentary and his ten years' labor for the British government, were numerous and of a kind requiring much labor and research. The whole secret lay in his regular and prompt habits. He was an early riser, very systematic, never leaving until tomorrow what he could do today, and was never unemployed. His labors are evidence of his unwearied industry, for it should be remembered that all his learning was obtained after he entered upon the ministry; and the itinerant ministry among the Wesleyans in his earlier days was no slight burden, and afforded but few advantages to the student.

He was a self-made scholar, in spite of almost insurmountable disadvantages, and triumphed over obstacles which would have appalled any but a man of giant energies and inflexible purpose. The purity of his life was unimpeached, even by rumor, and he went down to the grave as a ripe shock ready for the garner. His memory is blessed, for it is the memory of the just and good, and with his name will ever be associated the respect of all. No marble tablet or labored epitaph is required to preserve the remembrance of his virtues or the fame of his talents. They were known and read of all men, and are his everlasting memorial.

24 JOHN ANDERSON

“Then dress'd by thee, more amiably far,
Truth the soft robe of mild persuasion wears;
Thou to assenting reason giv'st again
Her own enlighten'd thoughts.”
-- Thomson --

The Rev. John Anderson finished his course with joy in 1840, having labored nearly twenty-nine years in the itinerancy, and being at the time of his decease about fifty years of age. He was a man of warm and sanguine temperament, of a tender, susceptible spirit, ardent in his friendships, fervent in piety, and zealously devoted to the duties of his sacred calling. In person he was tall; little, if any, less than six feet, of active frame, light complexion, florid countenance, with an unusual gathering of wrinkles about the mouth, which gave to the face an expression of bold daring, and almost recklessness of consequences when consciously right, in keeping, to a considerable degree, with the real character of the man. When combined with the smile which, when in social converse, would often spread over his ever-varying features – and especially when the face was illuminated with the radiance of holy joy while proclaiming the glorious gospel of the blessed God – the expression became modified into noble self-reliance, which was indeed a prominent feature in our subject's character. He was undaunted in the performance of duty,

“Bold to take up, firm to sustain,
The consecrated cross.”

My acquaintance with him commenced some nine years prior to his death, when he was superintendent of the Leeds East circuit, where he labored with great zeal and fervor, and proportionate acceptability. He was then approaching

the zenith of his popularity, to the consummation of which the following circumstance contributed not a little. It was the time when the people of England were universally excited upon the question of slavery, and a simultaneous movement was made for its abolition. A large meeting upon the subject was held in the Cloth Hall Yard -- the area of an immense three-sided building, where the country manufacturers exposed their woollen cloths for sale, and which -- the sides of the lofty building (five stories high) confining the sound -- was admirably adapted for such purposes. Some of the most prominent clergy and laymen of the town and surrounding country were engaged in the movement, and many of them were speakers on this occasion. Lord Brougham (then Mr.) was present by special invitation, and I think also Mr. Thomas B. Macaulay. Mr. Anderson was one of the speakers. It was an occasion peculiarly fitted to call out all his powers. He always spoke with great animation -- he could not do otherwise on any subject in which his feelings were interested -- and had a voice of astonishing compass, especially when there was no impediment to its full exertion. The spaciousness of the area, the immensity of the audience, and the fact that the meeting, being out of doors and on secular ground, required none of the restraints which he would have deemed obligatory in a place dedicated to divine worship, all favored our subject as a public speaker. Albeit few men were so enthusiastically patriotic as he; England was to him what the holy city was to the ancient Jews; and he believed his country's welfare and glory involved in the question about to be discussed. When called upon by the chairman, he stepped buoyantly to the front of the stage, his intelligent features glowing with enthusiasm. Looking round upon the vast audience with deep feeling, he commenced, and continued for upward of an hour and a half, a strain of impassioned eloquence, argument, and declamation blended, which was listened to with unbroken, attentive silence, save the repeated bursts of applause, which seemed each time to rouse the speaker to even greater effort. He was followed by Mr. Brougham, to whom until then Mr. Anderson was unknown, who passed high and well-deserved encomiums upon the speech, and pronounced it the most eloquent and masterly he had heard upon the stirring subject which had elicited it. Of course this contributed to make Mr. Anderson more widely known and appreciated among other denominations as well as the Wesleyan Methodists.

As a platform speaker Mr. Anderson was always efficient. In thought and feeling he was naturally impetuous, and when carried away by his strong emotions was sometimes rather diffuse. Of this he was perhaps conscious, and often in preaching was wont to restrain himself and labor at condensation and terseness. On the platform he hampered himself with no such shackles, but gave free utterance to his gushing feelings. He luxuriated in the wide range of topics which his warm heart suggested, ranging at will wherever there were flowers to be culled or fruits to be plucked; dashing from one part of the field to another, without regard to "line and rule;" and throwing riches of imagery around him with prodigal profusion. Here his excursive fancy found its most exquisite enjoyment; his warm, benevolent sympathies, a legitimate object for their fullest exercise; and here he kindled fires which no waters could quench. The magnitude of the object aimed at was proportioned to the might and compass of his ever active faith, which expanded as the teeming millions of his fellow-men passed in review before him, and he beheld them as souls for whom Christ had died. Never will the writer forget some of his more impassioned outbursts while dwelling on the theme of the world's conversion to God through the agency of his church, and the glory that should follow; with not an inexpressive eye in the vast audience, some gleaming with holy triumph, and others wet with tears; and many of God's people lifting up the joy-impelled shout of "glory" and hallelujah." O! Those were missionary meetings, worthy of the name and object; seasons of mingled triumph and hope, and earnest desire to aid in the speedy progress and consummation of the Redeemer's conquests, and productive no less of substantial gifts for the cause of missions than of earnest, heartfelt prayers for its success. No need was there, on those occasions, of other stimulus than the warm glow of holy gratitude and Christian zeal caught from the speaker's lips. No necessity then for offering life-memberships at auction; or for giving publicity to each donation. Such proceedings would, as they must ever, sooner or later, damp the hallowed enthusiasm enkindled by the hearty and heartfelt addresses of the speakers. The people gave "what they could," without undue solicitation, rivalry, or ostentation, and went down to their houses rejoicing that of their own volition they had paid tribute unto God. Or if, stifling their convictions of duty, they had restrained their hands, no extraneous influence did further harden by its frigid touch the emotions awakened, or deter the people from again presenting themselves when the season for the renewal of the advocacy came round; so that they were liable to be again brought under the same influence with better results. It cannot be denied that the large and yearly increasing funds, placed at the disposal of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, are an unanswerable argument in behalf of the plan pursued by the British Wesleyans. If it be objected that in this country the people are to blame -- that they will have it so -- that they need such adventitious incentives to liberality in such a cause, we deny the imputation; and fearlessly assert that the fault lies elsewhere. We have heard the murmurs of the

audience during the hour thus spent, and their expression of disapprobation such as we care not to repeat, but which evinced an alienation of interest and affection for the cause which, if they become general, must eventually dry up the fountains of benevolence, and turn the streams of beneficence in other directions.

But to return to Mr. Anderson. He was often peculiarly happy in the introduction of a verse of a hymn in his platform addresses, as also in his pulpit discourses. Some of his finest bursts of overpowering eloquence reached their climax in such a quotation, uttered with intensest feeling, leaving an impression which no time could efface. As a preacher he varied, and, though perhaps alone in the opinion, I always thought him most profitable at seasons when slightly depressed by personal indisposition or mental suffering. When in the full buoyancy of animal spirits, his physical energies and impulsive nature were apt to assume the mastery over his intellectual powers, and he could not keep his impetuosity under control; rather he seemed even to indulge it at the expense of condensed and consecutive thought – as though the rider partook of the temper of his steed, and throwing the reins upon its neck, allowed it to leap the fence and course the meadows as it listed, himself participating in the exhilaration and the waywardness of its evolutions. At such times a man had need of a good memory, and must call into exercise his utmost mnemotechnic skill, in order to preserve the thread of thought. Sentence would be involved within sentence, parenthesis within parenthesis, producing in the mind of the ordinary hearer something approaching to confusion, and to some extent diminishing the interest which the preacher's eloquence and earnestness tended to awaken.

But when there was less of this buoyancy and physical impetuosity, his sermons were peculiarly impressive and profitable, imbued with a tenderness which almost imperceptibly stole over the minds of the audience and made them willing recipients of the truth of God. Then his discourses dropped fatness upon the soul. He was a sound divine, thoroughly impregnated with the theology of Wesleyan Methodism, and experimentally versed in the deep things of God. At such times evidences of his communion with the Holy Spirit, and of his own native tenderness of heart, shone through almost every sentence, with the additional charm of refined delicacy of sentiment and often poetic grandeur of diction.

The following incident is related in a memoir of Mr. Anderson, which appeared in the Methodist Magazine, from the pen of his son-in-law. While attending the Conference of 1838, held in Bristol, he had to preach in one of the chapels in that city. Many of his brethren were present. He chose for his subject the prevalence of believing prayer, (a theme on which he loved to expatiate in private as well as from the, pulpit,) and after having dwelt upon it at some length with great eloquence and holy ardor, he paused as though about to conclude. But so entirely were the minds of his auditory enchained and impressed, so carried away by the intensity of their feelings, that a simultaneous cry of "Go on" burst from all parts of the chapel; and again he held up before them the "wondrous power of faithful prayer."

The same depth of emotion observable in his preaching was often shown while he was listening to others. I remember one occasion, when the Rev. Peter Duncan, some short time after his return from the West Indies, (where he so successfully labored as a missionary until driven thence by the persecuting spirit of the planters,) was preaching in Mr. Anderson's stead, at Brunswick Chapel, in Leeds, the latter sitting behind him in the pulpit. The text was, "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh," &c. The sermon was in every part full of the genius of the preacher, whose whole soul was absorbed in his theme, and whose glowing eloquence riveted the rapt attention of his audience; Mr. Anderson himself with difficulty restraining his emotions as the grand subject was gradually unfolded. Soon the tears coursed each other down his cheeks, and his eyes, often lifted upward, told the deep feelings of his heart. But when Mr.

Duncan took up the sentence, "believed on in the world'," and glanced at the progress of Christianity, and recounted its triumphs over all opposition, the congregation began to utter their abounding joy.

Mr. Anderson could no longer keep silent, and shouted with deep feeling, "Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!" The congregation only needed such a spark to make the smoldering fire burst into a flame; his joyous exclamation was soon echoed from every part of the vast building, and for a moment the preacher had to pause, only, however, to proceed with increased earnestness and power in the exposition of his text.

It may here be mentioned, to Mr. Anderson's honor, that no petty jealousy ever interfered with his feelings toward his brethren. This was a fine trait in his character. In 1837 he was stationed in the Leeds West circuit, and for some time was pained to see so little life in the society, and such slow progress of the Redeemer's kingdom. Never did his

ministry savor more of the closet, and of deep meditation over the sacred page; never was he more zealous and abundant in labors, watering all with earnest and unceasing prayer, that, upon the people to whom he ministered, “The Lord would shortly pour

All the Spirit of his love.”

In September, of the following year, the Lord of the harvest heard the cry, and rewarded the zeal of his servant. A gracious revival of religion broke out in the circuit. This long-prayed-for result was generally attributed to the labors of one of Mr. Anderson’s colleagues, a young man whose ministry has, indeed, been wonderfully blessed, in the conviction and conversion of sinners, “from the beginning, even until now.” The subject of our sketch, however, not only showed no jealousy, or ever in the most private circles evinced the slightest sense of the injustice done to him; but everywhere bore spontaneous testimony to his young colleague’s devoted zeal, ardent piety, and ministerial talents and faithfulness, while, toward the young man himself, he acted the part of a wise counselor, an affectionate friend, and a tender father. The Rev. William M. Bunting, when preaching Mr. Anderson’s funeral sermon at Liverpool, bore strong testimony to this phase of his character.

No delineation of our subject as a preacher would be just to him that did not allude to the prominence he gave in all his sermons (nor less so in his correspondence and private conversation) to Christ and HIM crucified, and the necessity and efficacy of faith in his blood. “He was ‘mighty in the Scriptures;’ he was eloquent on the great themes of the gospel. The fascinations of the orator (and that he possessed these, was admitted by all) were mostly lost to his hearers in resistless sympathy with the rapt worshiper and witness of Christ crucified.” Fervent piety was at the root of all his preaching – the motive for all his labors. He had no panting after popular favor or applause.

I have intimated that Mr. Anderson appeared to great advantage upon the platform as well as in the pulpit. There were other services in which his soul took delight – those holy festivals common to all Methodists, and those peculiar to the British Wesleyan societies. Among the former are included class meetings, in which he delighted to participate at the quarterly visitations; lovefeasts, in which, when he conducted them, he always spoke freely of his experience; and the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, which was to him, and those to whom he ministered, always a season of hallowed enjoyment. Few men administered that ordinance with such seeming cognizance of and participation in its true spirit and character. Among the latter are the old-fashioned watch-night, and the “renewal of the covenant.”

This latter is held on the afternoon of the first Sunday in the new year, and is one of the most impressive means of grace known to the Wesleyan Church. Mr. Anderson never conducted it without evincing a high estimate of its solemn and almost awful character. I have been present at this service at various times, led by such men as Revs. Richard Treffry, senior, Robert Wood, Peter McOwan, Francis A. West, and others, when it was conducted with the utmost impressiveness and propriety; but our present subject had a constitutional advantage over most in that, while he brought to the performance of this duty equal dignity and solemnity, there was in his nature an affinity – amounting to a poetico-religious sympathy, if such an expression may be allowed – with the emotional grandeur of the service, which impressed into it, in an unequaled degree, a grateful, joyous fervor. I would fain give the reader some idea of the nature of this service, although deeply conscious that any picture will fall far short of the imposing original.

It has already been said that this service is held on the afternoon of the first Sabbath in the new year. Where, as in the large places, there are two or more town chapels, all but the principal one are closed at the hour for the celebration of this service, as also are the country chapels within a moderate distance, so that the members of society, for they alone are admitted, may, of one accord, and in one place, assemble to pay their vows unto the Most High, and renew their covenant with the God of Jacob. Hence the chapel is generally crowded to its utmost capacity. The preacher commences the service by giving out the covenant hymn,

“Come, let us use the grace divine,
And all, with one accord,
In a perpetual cov’nant join
Ourselves to Christ the Lord;”

which is sung by the whole congregation, the lifting up of whose voice is as the sound of many waters. Prayer by one or more of the ministers follows; and a brief address, pointing out the duty and responsibility of making a

solemn covenant with the Almighty. The minister who conducts the service then apprises the people that he is about to read a form of covenant, (Baxter's is universally, or at least generally, used,) and desires them, preparatory thereto, well to weigh and consider the nature and extent of the obligation upon which they are about solemnly to enter; to this end he advises them to spend a few moments in silent meditation and prayer, and closely examine themselves whether they are firmly and deliberately set upon this entire surrender of themselves to God. These are moments of deathlike stillness, of close searchings of heart. At their expiration, the minister again addresses the people, and invites those who have well weighed the import and consequences of the solemn act, and have in their hearts faithfully resolved by divine grace to pay the vows they are about to make, and only these, to rise to their feet in signification of that purpose.

It is an awful moment – that great congregation about to enter into a solemn covenant, each for himself, with the God of truth, the omnipresent, omniscient, immutable Jehovah, and their Judge; to be his faithfully, unalterably, for time and for eternity. Truly may it then be said, “Lo, how dreadful is this place.” You may almost hear the pulsation of the hearts of those around you. Yet with few exceptions the vast audience slowly rise, for few will go to such a service that are not God's people at heart; the occasion is all too awful for curiosity, or hypocrisy, or half heartedness, to intrude itself. The few who remain sitting are not less sincere than others, but they distrust themselves and tremble to pass the threshold of Jehovah's presence chamber. With subdued voice, but with clear and distinct utterance, the minister reads the whole or principal parts of the covenant vow, until he comes to the words of dedication. He and the people then kneel; slowly and solemnly he repeats each sentence, the people by their silence acquiescing; then again all is still for a few moments; the ascription of praise is uttered, and the pent-up feelings of the audience find expression in sobs or gentle breathings of holy joy and thanksgiving. The covenant is made; the seal of acceptance is given; the Lord is in his holy temple, sometimes brooding over his people and infusing into their hearts

“The speechless awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love,”

sometimes consoling them with inward assurances of peace, and guidance, and protection; and sometimes sweeping over their hearts as a “rushing mighty wind,” filling the place with his glory, and diffusing through every soul such an indubitable sense of his love and presence that the people shout aloud for joy. Truly the covenant service as held among the English Methodists is, beyond almost every other means of grace, a time when the tabernacle of God is with men, and he doth dwell among them and is their God.^[20]

In 1833 Mr. Anderson was stationed in one of the Manchester circuits. What was known as the “Warrenite disturbance” took place while he was there, and his spirit was sorely tried. He was intrepid in the exercise of discipline and the maintenance of the Wesleyan economy, although fiercely and bitterly assailed and maligned for so doing. His last circuit was the Liverpool North, where he yielded up his life, after some months of acutest bodily suffering, but of patient continuance in well doing, and finally of triumphant joy in the Holy Ghost.

26 GEORGE MORLEY

“He is not witty, nor teamed, nor eloquent, but holy; a character that Hermogines never dreamed of; and therefore he could give no precepts thereof.” -- Herbert's Country Pastor.

The Rev. George Morley was the immediate predecessor of the Rev. Dr. Bunting in the office of senior missionary secretary, and fulfilled the onerous duties of that position with high satisfaction to the connection at large, and to the missionaries who ever found in him a judicious counselor and a faithful and sympathizing friend. In 1830 he was elected president of the Conference, in which office he won much esteem. At the Conference of 1831 he was appointed governor of the preachers' sons' academy, at Woodhouse Grove, where the writer's acquaintance with him first commenced.

For the duties of that office he was eminently qualified, mingling in his deportment urbanity and dignity, kindness and discipline, in just and admirable proportions. The institution prospered greatly under his administration, his excellent wife making almost a sacrifice of herself for its welfare, and her daughter cordially co-operating with both

in their ceaseless devotion to its interests. Mr. Morley died while holding this important post in the Wesleyan connection.

In Duval's centenary picture, elsewhere alluded to in this volume, the subject of this sketch occupies a prominent place. His personal appearance conveyed the idea of perfect contentment. He was of low stature, probably five feet six inches, but his corpulence made him appear perhaps less than that. While exceedingly rotund and fleshy, there was so much of intelligence and character in the countenance, that the intellectual and moral aspect of the man struck the stranger much more forcibly than the physical, and the impression first made upon the mind was of a most pleasant sort.

Benevolence, intelligence, affability, and over these a veil of meditative quietude, would be attributed to him by the most casual observer – they were written, as with a sunbeam, upon his bland and open countenance. But closer inspection would detect more than these. Firmness of purpose, close observation and ready discernment of character, and clearness of perception, were strongly marked characteristics of the man, and it could not fail to be seen that with all this seeming repose – apparently amounting almost to indolence of thought – the intellect was active and vigorous; and the entire man, mental and physical, was held under vigilant control, ready for any duty or emergency that might call his powers into exercise. No one could sit long in his company without feeling a restraint and deference, almost reaching veneration and awe, on the first introduction, but subsequently subsiding into a pleasanter feeling, if the reverend gentleman's estimate of your character justified him in giving you his confidence. With all the beaming goodness and 'bon hommie' appearance of Mr. Morley, there was a reserve – though that word is a shade too strong to express my precise meaning – which forbade undue freedom of access. It seemed, in effect, to say that the reverend gentleman would rather form his own judgment of character than rely upon mere report; and the probability was, that having for awhile directed your conversation elsewhere, on again addressing Mr. Morley, you would detect him thoughtfully and closely, but never rudely, scanning you; while something in the eye told you that you were, or would be, thoroughly understood. His discernment rarely failed him, and his confidence once given, he was a faithful friend through every vicissitude, and his sound judgment and extensive knowledge of men and things made him an invaluable counselor and guide.

Mr. Morley was emphatically a preacher of the gospel. An extensive reader, and of no mean acquirements in general literature, he held these subordinate to the authoritative and didactic truths of the gospel, and ministered to those who heard him the unadulterated word of God. A rich, evangelical unction, attended his preaching – the demonstration of the Spirit with power – while the practical doctrines of Christianity, its elevated morality and high requirements, were strenuously insisted upon. Mere emotion he never sought to excite. He taught the people out of the Scriptures – their duties and their privileges were set before them, not with vehemence or in strains of impassioned eloquence, but with clearness and force. His ministry was more adapted to feed the flock of Christ than to please those who had itching ears, or attract those who had not yet tasted of the things of God. Not that he was lacking in correctness of style, fluency of utterance, or elevation of thought. His style was, indeed, remarkably chaste, his thoughts always well arranged, and his subject well digested. But his mind was contemplative rather than impulsive, appreciative rather than vigorous; his views correct rather than startling; and his sermons such as were to be thought of at home, and meditated upon in the closet long after they had been listened to from the pulpit.

Not many ministers more universally enjoyed the confidence and esteem of their brethren than the Rev. George Morley; and his death occasioned a deep feeling through the connection. "Few men," says the brief official notice in the Minutes, "have pursued, for upward of half a century, a more unbroken course of activity and usefulness; his labors being continued, with scarcely a day's interruption, until the last month of his earthly career. His life was one of perpetual sunshine. He was, emphatically, a happy man; and his end perfectly accorded with the tenor of his life. Shortly before his departure, he said, with great emphasis, 'I gave myself to God, and to his people, threescore years ago, and he has never left me. He is with me now; and he will never leave me nor forsake me.'"

28 WILLIAM SHAW

"Unto me is this grace given, that I should preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

In the “Wesleyan Centenary Takings,” so often referred to in this volume, it is very justly said of the Rev. William Shaw, that he is no believer in the sentiment of Voltaire: “Bring together all the children of the universe, and you will see nothing in them but innocence, gentleness, and fear; were they born wicked, spiteful, and cruel, some signs of it would come from them, as little snakes strive to bite, and little tigers to tear; But nature having been as sparing of offensive weapons to man as to pigeons and rabbits, it cannot have given them an instinct to mischief and destruction.” Such a creed, adds the author of the “Takings,” would have saved Mr. Shaw much risk and toil in the African deserts.

But Mr. Shaw knows human nature better than did Voltaire, and is not the man to build his practice upon such a shallow sophism. He knows that man is depraved; that reason, intelligence – the means which God gave man for defense and the maintenance of his superiority over other created beings – are willfully and awfully perverted, and used as a “weapon of rebellion” against the donor; that man is tainted with moral evil; that without the restraints of divine grace and the renewing energy of the Holy Ghost, the human heart is “evil, and only evil, and evil continually;” and the negative virtues of infancy and childhood are overruled by the positive waywardness, perverseness, and hostility to all that is holy, of the heart of man; and hence he “counts not his life dear unto him, so that he may fulfill his course with joy, and the ministry he has received of the Lord Jesus.” There are in the Wesleyan connection two missionaries of the name of Shaw, Barnabas and William; each of whom has spent a great part of his life amid the savage tribes of Africa, and, by his devotion and success, earned a high and enviable reputation. There exists, I believe, no consanguinity between them. Of the former I have no personal knowledge, and do not recollect that I ever saw him. He is universally spoken of as a man of a fine spirit; of indomitable perseverance in the work to which he has given himself; and has been not inaptly styled “the apostle of Wesleyan missions to Southern Africa.” His “Memorials” ^[21] will be a lasting monument of his devotion, zeal, and success.

With the Rev. William Shaw I had the happiness of a slight acquaintance during the brief interval of his missionary life. He was then stationed in the Leeds West circuit, probably in the years 1831-2.

His personal appearance strongly indicated his character. He is a man of strong sense rather than of brilliant parts; of a frank and manly nature and noble spirit; and endued with a personal courage that shrinks from no danger, but would brave any peril, or dare any enterprise, which duty involved or prompted; yet, withal, prudent and discreet -- “a fine specimen of the missionary spirit and character.” This was shown on his first entrance upon his missionary life, some twenty-five years ago. His original station was within the bounds of the colonial government, at Graham’s Town, I think, and consequently he was exposed to comparatively little peril, being under British protection.

But his heart yearned toward the poor outcasts in the “regions beyond,” and he resolved to visit them.

He consulted the colonial authorities upon the subject, who warned him of the perils he would encounter; of their inability to protect him beyond a certain line, further than which they neither exercised nor claimed jurisdiction; apprised him of the character of the Kaffir population, their ferocity, treachery, and cunning; and assured him that it would be madness, amounting to a criminal disregard of life, for any person to go alone, even ten miles beyond the border; much more so to attempt to penetrate into the interior, as he proposed, unarmed and unprepared to resist or intimidate the wily, exasperated, and cruel Kaffirs. But “none of these things moved him.” He had seen some of these wretched people in their occasional visits to the colony, and he longed to preach to them the knowledge of Christ crucified; to impart to them, in some measure, the blessings of civilization, and to raise them from the depths of their degradation and vice.

Mrs. Shaw had scarcely less of the missionary spirit than her noble husband. She sympathized cordially in his views and feelings, and, prompted and sustained by Christian heroism, seconded his resolves, and declared herself ready to endure any toil or hardship, and brave any danger, to which, in Mr. Shaw’s absence, she might be exposed. Thus strengthened, he set about the execution of his purpose; and with one or two attendants he and his heroic helpmeet journeyed toward the frontier.

The line was reached, the eventful crisis was upon them; the attendants and Mrs. Shaw prepared to take their leave, not without another remonstrance, on the part of the attendants, with Mr. Shaw on his hazardous enterprise. It was an awful moment – an eventful crisis. The stern reality of a missionary’s life presented itself in its most uninviting aspect. The dark untrodden wilds of Kaffraria lay before him; a land inhabited only by savage and cruel tribes,

whom only the gospel could tame, and who might refuse its overtures, and fatally resent the white man's intrusion into their haunts.

Dense forests were to be traversed, where he could hear only the roar of the lion or howl of the wolf; before him were days and nights of exposure to the elements, relieved only by temporary shelter amid the filth and savage rudeness of an African kraal. But to endure these were less hardship than to leave behind friends, and countrymen, and wife; and voluntarily to shut himself out from the civilized world, and the protecting shadow of the British scepter, so powerful to shield those upon whom it rests. The choice had to be made, and Mr. Shaw "staggered not at the promise because of unbelief," save for a moment as he turned to bid adieu to his devoted wife. But she had nerved herself for the trial; nay, rather she had looked to "the strong for strength" to complete a sacrifice, the magnitude of which none but a loving, Christian wife, could understand; and that strength was supplied to her from above. She bade him go into the far country, into the wilderness, as God had commanded; and take with him her heart, and her admiration of his Christian integrity and fortitude, and her prayers and her blessing, and the assurance of God's protecting care and love over both him and her. And then the attendants were requested to retire to a short distance, and the noble-hearted missionary and his, if possible, nobler-hearted wife knelt down beside their solitary wagon and presented themselves a "living sacrifice unto God." When they rose from their knees, they resolutely separated, the one to return to Graham's Town, the other to go forth amid strangers and savages, confident, however, that he was in the keeping of Him whose presence should be his protection, and his right arm – his defense. That was true heroism, before which deeds of valor on the battle field, amid the excitement of conflict and the hope of renown, pale their fires; and he the bravest warrior who, single-handed and without carnal weapons, boldly entered the enemy's country to subdue it to the allegiance of Christ.

After some ten or eleven years' uninterrupted missionary life, Mr. Shaw returned for a short time to his native land, the disturbed condition of affairs in Africa interrupting for a season the successful prosecution of his labors. His reputation, by means of his letters and journals occasionally published in the "Missionary Notices," had preceded him, and many circuits desired his services. There being no immediate prospect of an "open door" for his return to Africa, he was, at the ensuing Conference after his return, regularly stationed in the home work. After some three or four years, events took a more favorable turn; the British government expressed a strong desire that the Wesleyan Missionary Society would reoccupy the ground they had temporarily abandoned, and Mr. Shaw was apprised that the committee desired his return. The British government, however, were not content with the simple expression of their wish that the society's stations should be reoccupied; but having, in the prosecution of their inquiries into the difficulties which had occurred between the natives and the colonists, partially ascertained the universal esteem in which Mr. Shaw was held, and the vast influence which he had acquired, proposed to the main committee that he should return into the interior, clothed with official power, next in rank to the colonial governor: that, in fact, he should go out as deputy governor, resident among the native population, the government taking upon themselves his support, or contributing to the society a sum equivalent thereto. To supersede any objection which might be raised, they were even willing, and it was a proof of their confidence both in Mr. Shaw and the missionary committee, that he should retain, to its fullest extent, his missionary character and office, and be held responsible, first of all, to the society with which he had been so long and honorably connected.

These, I believe, were the facts of the case, and the missionary committee were not a little embarrassed by the proposal; especially as feeling ran high in the colony upon the subject, as it also did in England. Ungenerous and unjust remarks had been published upon the conduct of the Wesleyan missionaries, in quarters where the committee, and the friends of missions generally, had a right to expect better things. Frequent and grave were the consultations of the committee. There were advantages, which it would not have been right to overlook; but there was a possible danger in uniting the official or political character with that of the ministerial, which seemed to outweigh every other consideration, and finally induced the committee respectfully to decline the proposal.

The committee, however, saw the propriety of clothing Mr. Shaw with additional powers from themselves: he was made "chairman of the Albany and Kaffraria district, and general superintendent of the Wesleyan missions in South-Eastern Africa," resident at Graham's Town; which office he has now held, for more than twelve years, with entire satisfaction to all interested in that somewhat peculiar field of missionary labor.^[22]

As was intimated, it was during his three or four years' sojourn in his native land, that my comparatively slight acquaintance with Mr. Shaw was formed. I more than once accompanied him to his week-night appointments in the

country, or went to meet him on his return. His society was exceedingly agreeable, and his conversation entertaining as well as profitable. His manners were remarkably unassuming. Few men are so free from egotism, especially when they have passed through such varied and peculiar scenes as he has, and of which friends were constantly desiring to hear and urging him to speak. He was always somewhat chary of narrating his adventures, and modestly avoided the lionism they would have thrust upon him; and there was something about him – a sort of unobtrusive dignity, it could scarcely be called reserve – which checked any undue or impertinent pressing upon him of such disclosures. Under the circumstances, however, of my almost only opportunities of conversing with him, he would very cheerfully narrate incidents of his African life. Had I then contemplated ever paying this tribute to Mr. Shaw's worth, and piety, and well-tempered zeal, I would have labored hard to memorize the particulars of those familiar narrations.

While traversing the wilds and forests of Kaffraria, Mr. Shaw was often six and nine months, and sometimes longer, without spending a single night under a roof, other than the "star-spangled" arch of heaven, sleeping sometimes upon the ground, but more frequently poised in the branches of a tree, because of the wild and ferocious beasts which there abounded. He got to prefer sleeping out of doors, experiencing a sense of suffocation, and a degree of fever which deprived him of rest, when covered with a roof. And this he felt long after his return to England. When he first commenced his travels among the Kaffirs, it was almost certain death for an unarmed man to approach their haunts, or even travel through any portion of the country over which the Kaffirs are scattered. But before he left, the man, who with a steady and truthful eye could declare himself "a missionary," (using the native word,) could pass in any and every direction, not only safely, but would find the natives willing to leave any employment for the sake of hearing the gospel, or of conducting the missionary to his next place of call. Yet in all this there was peril; but Mr. Shaw's trust was in God; he relied upon the promise of protection and guidance given to the faithful; he felt that his mission was from Heaven, and no toil or danger could deter him from fulfilling it.

I remember walking home with Mr. Shaw one very dark night, and our path lay through a gloomy and unfrequented road. Something transpired to awaken associations on his heart, which led him to narrate the following circumstance, which occurred during the latter part of his first missionary service. He had been preaching somewhere near the border line, at an African village, where it was usual for some member of the family of a Dutch Boor, residing at some four or five miles' distance, to meet him and to take him to the farm house to spend the night. On this evening none of this family were present; and, after preaching, Mr. Shaw mounted his nag and started for the Boor's farm. He had not traveled far, and was ascending a narrow path cut in the mountain side, when he heard behind him the howl of wolves, a couple of which soon rushed past him, making "night hideous" with their yells. Mr. Shaw – knowing that their habit was to start their game into flight, and then, pursuing it, hang upon its flanks, until, its strength being exhausted, it became an easy prey – reined in his horse, and quietly patted it upon the neck. Fortunately, it was an old, staid animal, accustomed to such matters, and jogged on without seeming to notice the disturbance. Soon the two, with companions, rushed down the road, thus meeting the horse and his rider. Still the maneuver failed – only, however, to be repeated with increased fierceness and impetuosity from each side of the road; and as the number of wolves had now increased to a considerable pack, Mr. Shaw began seriously to apprehend danger from their assault. Aware of the influence of the human voice upon these ferocious, but cowardly animals, he endeavored to intimidate them by shouting, and also by cracking his whip. As they approached the farm house, he increased his vociferations, (for the wolves were becoming uncomfortably bold and persevering in their approaches,) and thus aroused the dogs, which, by Dutch settlers, are always kept in great numbers there; and the wolves gradually slunk away, leaving Mr. Shaw and his horse both unharmed. Some other similar narrow escapes he narrated to me, the circumstances of which I cannot remember with sufficient accuracy to repeat them.

As a preacher Mr. Shaw was more instructive and profitable than attractive. His sermons were always clear, lucid, common-sense expositions of the truth; his walk and conversation among the people were eminently seasoned with personal piety and sound judgment; and his attention to his pastoral duties was unceasing and uniform. His personal appearance was pleasing. In stature he was about five feet seven; the countenance pleasing, combining, in a remarkable degree, benevolence and firmness; the eye dark, bright, and full, and the hair black. An expression of sweet serenity played about the lips. He was not guilty of conformity to the world in the matter of apparel, which, though always good of its kind, was in fashion upon the model of that worn by the early Methodist preachers.

APPENDIX

NOTICES OF ENGLISH METHODISM

It has been suggested that an exposition of the economy of Wesleyan Methodism – its *modus operandi* – with especial reference to the itinerancy, would be an acceptable, and perhaps useful, conclusion to this volume. Though, from the limited space at my disposal, such an exposition must be necessarily brief, and so far imperfect, yet I feel disposed to adopt the suggestion, and shall be gratified if these pages contribute in any degree to the general restoration, so far as practicable, of that distinguishing feature of Wesleyan Methodism, and chief element of its success the itinerant circuit system. What stress Mr. Wesley laid upon this, those who have read his journals and correspondence can best attest. The system is to this day rigidly adhered to in Great Britain. What we call stations, are unknown in the British Connection. Except in the case of certain officers of the Conference, as book-stewards, editors, missionary secretaries, presidents and tutors of the theological institutions, governors of academies, supernumeraries, &c., every preacher has, singly, or in company with others, a circuit assigned him, to every part of which some portion of his time and labor must be devoted, according to an established plan. There are in Great Britain about four hundred and thirty circuits, and one thousand effective preachers.

To show somewhat the extent of these, and the plan of operations in them, I will give a few particulars of two of the Manchester circuits. Manchester is divided into five Circuits, to each of which a portion of the neighboring country is attached.

In the SECOND MANCHESTER CIRCUIT there are three traveling, and perhaps twenty or twenty-five local, preachers, and about one thousand six hundred and fifty members in society. The preaching places are as follows: -- Irwell Street and Grovel Lane chapels, in Salford; the superintendent resides close to the former, and the second preacher near the latter. Broughton, with an elegant Gothic chapel, in the suburbs; the congregation select and wealthy. Pendleton, also in the suburbs, but among a more mixed population; a neat, medium-sized, galleried chapel, about two miles from Salford. Irlams o' th' Heights, about three miles distant from the circuit town; a good chapel, and chiefly a rural population. Swinton, four miles; a large chapel, the population partly rural, partly working manufacturers, and partly colliers. Walkden Moor, six miles; a good-sized chapel, population mainly colliers. Boothstown, eight miles; a large preaching room, people poor and illiterate. Worsley, seven miles; chapel good, Congregation chiefly colliers, with a sprinkling of some old Methodist families. Each of these places is preached at by the traveling preachers in rotation at stated times on the Sunday, and once a week on the week nights. The Country chapels will seat from four to eight hundred. There are some half dozen other places, varying in distance from two to eight miles, supplied every Sunday by local preachers. Nearly all the appointments have preaching twice on the Sunday, some three times, the local cooperating with the itinerant preachers in supplying them. Except occasionally, the town chapels are supplied by the itinerant ministers. A horse is not kept for the preachers, who walk to their country appointments both on Sundays and week days, getting a "lift," or ride, occasionally, as they can.

Of the FIFTH MANCHESTER CIRCUIT I have before me a plan or program, exhibiting the "order of the religious services" for the months of April, May, and June, 1847. This plan, which is issued quarterly, is printed in pamphlet form, contains the times and places of preaching, class meetings, prayer meetings, and other services; and the names and residences of the preachers, itinerant and local: the remaining space is filled up with a number of passages, of a practical character, from various religious authors.^[23] By means of this I am enabled to exhibit a detail of the manner in which the circuit is worked. The preachers are the Revs. Francis A. West, Frederick J.

Jobson, and John Kirk. The circuit is not so laborious in the number and distance of the appointments as many others; but, as is often the case in the large towns and cities, the preachers have to perform a great amount of labor in attending committees, &c. The table which follows will give a view of the services for three Sundays.

[See Table.Tif for the table data that appeared at this point in the text. -- DVM] From the foregoing the reader will be enabled to form an idea of the plan of itinerancy in the circuits connected with the cities and large towns. In the country circuits, especially in the more rural districts, the journeys are of necessity longer, and preachers are sometimes absent from home an entire week or fortnight; and they invariably preach three times on the Sabbath, and nearly every night in the week, except Saturday; riding or walking from five to fifteen miles each day. From the "Plan" of a circuit in the county of Kent, I find that it contains twenty-four appointments, at each of which there is

preaching every Lord's day. There are two traveling and thirty-four local preachers.

Thirty-nine sermons are preached every Sunday; six by the traveling preachers, and thirty-three by the local brethren.

It will be seen at once from these statements, that the local preachers are a far more numerous and important class in the Wesleyan Connection than they are with us. [24] The services of these laborious and self-denying brethren are as regularly and systematically required and rendered, as those of the traveling ministers, and could be as little dispensed with. It is no uncommon thing for one of these worthies – and no men in the general more deserve the appellation – to walk fifteen, twenty, and even twenty-five miles, and preach twice or three times on the Sabbath, after retiring from a week's toil late on Saturday night, to resume it early again on Monday morning. And this may be said to the everlasting honor of the local preachers in the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, that it is exceedingly rare for an appointment to be neglected, however stormy the weather or distant the place. Yet there are men among them daily accustomed to all the conveniences and comforts, and even luxuries, of life; and others, whose talents qualify them to occupy any pulpit either in this country or in England.

I would add, that I have only known one instance of a traveling preacher omitting to fulfill a country appointment on account of stress of weather, and he was over-persuaded by his better half, under the influence of such a storm as might almost have justified the omission. It turned out, however, that an unusual moving among the people had been experienced, and a very large congregation was disappointed. I verily believe that "hailstones and coals of fire" could not have driven him to a repetition of the neglect.

Another feature in English Methodism is the quarterly visitation of the classes by the preachers, in the months of March, June, September, and December, at which times the members receive their quarterly tickets. This is strictly attended to in every circuit in the connection. No preacher leaves his circuit on any account at these times, be he superintendent or assistant, unless adequate arrangements can be made to supply his lack of service in this particular. The superintendent draws out the plan for himself and colleagues, and the classes to be met by them during the week are duly announced from the pulpit. Members who are somewhat slack at other times, generally contrive to attend at these visitations; albeit they are subjected to a rigid examination as to the causes and effects of their inattention during the quarter. The preacher, in looking over the class-book, takes due note of all particulars therein recorded, and administers counsel or reproof accordingly. If a member has regularly neglected class during the quarter, the leader having been faithful in the mean time in visiting, exhorting, and warning, the preacher unhesitatingly withholds the quarterly ticket, the sole evidence of membership, until he has opportunity of visiting the member. If, however, the member, without good and sufficient reason, neglects a regular attendance during the second quarter, he withholds the ticket altogether, and the member's name is erased, subject to an appeal to the leaders meeting. Each member, on receiving the quarterly ticket, says what he can afford to give, not "for his ticket," as some speak of it, but toward what is called the preacher's quarterage – the sum allowed to each preacher for the incidental expenses of his household. The minimum payment of each member is a penny a week and a shilling a quarter. This, however, is never asked for from any one who, it may be supposed, cannot afford it; while, on the other hand, many members pay from twopence to sixpence weekly, and from half a crown to twenty shillings quarterly. The payment of the quarterly donation is almost always made before the class is dismissed.

The preachers also frequently convene what are called "Society meetings." This duty generally devolves upon the superintendent, though the other preachers are equally at liberty to attend to it as they see fit or find occasion. If there be any excitement abroad – political or otherwise; or any peculiar state of the society demanding special counsel, the preacher, at the close of the Sunday evening discourse, expresses his wish that the members of society, or, as we should say, "church members," will stay for a short time after the congregation is dismissed. Nor does the preacher always wait for such special reason. When the members are thus alone, he speaks to them with kind familiarity on such topics as could not so well be introduced in a mixed assembly, and makes the meeting profitable for "doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." These meetings, as they tend to evince the pastor's interest in his flock, greatly promote fellowship between them.

The leaders meeting is held generally once a fortnight. The leaders show their class-books, and pay in the two weeks' contributions of the members. The preachers make a note of any who attend their classes irregularly, from whatever cause, and visit them. Cases of poor members are considered, on application from the leader, and such relief as is required is apportioned them from the poor's fund.

This business being over, new leaders are appointed, when needed, and some time is spent in conversation and prayer. Each leader endeavors, so far as in him lies, to get his members to pay weekly; which is at the foundation of the admirable financial arrangements of the English Wesleyans.

The quarterly meeting somewhat resembles our “quarterly conferences.” In the larger circuits it generally commences in the forenoon, and is occupied with purely financial matters until dinner-time. The local preachers, leaders, and stewards, from the whole circuit, attend, as far as practicable. Each place has its representation. ‘Thirty, forty, or even fifty persons, will be present.

The meeting is usually held in the vestry of the principal town chapel. After the morning’s business, they dine together; sometimes at the superintendent’s house; sometimes in one of the large classrooms connected with the chapel. After dinner, and half an hour’s breathing time, they again assemble to converse upon and arrange the more general matters pertaining to the circuit. It should have been said, however, that the local preachers’ meeting is generally held before the regular quarterly meeting commences. They have entire jurisdiction over their own body; the admission of candidates on trial, or upon the full plan; the examination into character, doctrine, &c.; and the alteration of the hours of country preaching, should it be desired. The name of each local preacher is called, and the questions asked, -- “Has he neglected any appointment during the quarter? Are there any complaints against his moral character, or soundness of doctrine? Does he continue acceptable?” &c. &c. The names of the places are next called, and any suggestions or information called for. When their business is transacted, the meeting adjourns, and the members become integral parts of the quarterly meeting, where, during the afternoon, the representatives from the different places give accounts of the spiritual, or, more properly, connectional prospects, &c.. At these meetings too, at the proper season, the stationed preachers are invited to continue in the circuit; or, if their time be expired, the choice of new ones is discussed. In this meeting, also, the superintendent introduces the names of any candidates for the itinerancy, having previously appointed such to preach in the town chapel, that all the members of the meeting may have the opportunity of hearing and judging of the candidate’s fitness for the recommendation to the district meeting. The exercises of the day are generally concluded with a watch-night.

ENDNOTES

1 The number of members on the mission stations at the same period was 100,903; total number of members, exclusive of those on trial, under the care of the British and Irish conferences, 404,315 and in Canada, 21,749; and of ministers within a fraction of 2,000.

2 The name of an old Methodist chapel in Leeds. In the dialect of Yorkshire the term “boggard” means “a ghost”: This old chapel was formerly said to be haunted; whence the name by which it is still popularly designated.

3 Kingswood School

4 Mr. Reece traveled, without interruption, for a longer period than any other Methodist preacher – no less than fifty-nine years. Those who came nearest to him in the duration of their itinerant labors were Thomas Taylor of the British conference, and George Pickering of the New England conference, each of whom completed fifty-six years. The next longest is Richard Waddy of the British conference, who was an effective preacher fifty-three years.

5 Every “guard” speaks of “his” coach and when on the road he is about as supreme as the captain of a ship is at sea. Generally they are shrewd, observant, intelligent men, civil, and often generous fellows, with a due regard to the main chance.

6 The itinerant and local preachers’ printed plan, renewed quarterly and distributed through the circuit.

7 Mr. Everett, in his Life of Dawoon, relates, that once at a prayer meeting, where Hick was present, one of the mourners had failed to find peace. As Samuel, after the benediction was pronounced, was leaving the house, some of the friends said to him, “you will not leave the person in distress?” “Bless you, bairns,” he sharply returned “She will serve as a match to kindle the fire with tomorrow’ night.” As nothing like contrivance or management ever entered into Sammy’s thoughts or arrangements, he must have been somewhat wanting in faith, or failing in

physical strength, when he made this reply.

8 Backstone: a large circular iron plate, used in Yorkshire to bake what are called “short cakes,” which are eaten at breakfast or tea hot as they are taken off the backstone.

9 On one occasion, says Mr. Everett, a grave man on a missionary platform, knowing that Samuel had to speak, whispered to him, “Let us have no levity today, Sammy.” When he arose, he observed, “Mr. J., sitting there, [pointing to him,] says, ‘Let us have no levity today.’ Why, bless him, as to himself, he can nother mak folk laugh nor cry.” To another gentleman, who said, “Be short, Sammy,” as he arose to speak, he smartly returned, “Stop a bit I’ve not begun yet.” 10 A characteristic circumstance is related of the death of this good man. His mammoth bulk has already been referred to. Shortly before his death he became apparently unconscious, and the mourners around his bed spoke in low whispers of his exit. It appeared as though every breath would be his last; and his friends began to anticipate the immediate performance of the last rites for the dying saint. The difficulty of carrying down a narrow staircase so large and heavy a corpse as his, when confined, occurred to one of the bystanders, who mentioned the difficulty to another, little supposing that “Sammy” would comprehend or even hear his remark. But the old man did hear, and roused himself to notice it. Speaking with apparent ease and with the utmost calmness, he said, “Friends, ye’ve been takken thowt for my poor body; I’ll tell ye what t’ do. When I dee, u tak a couple o’ sheets, an carry me down stairs in ‘em by ‘t four comers, and then put me in ‘t coffin.” After this he relapsed into a state of apparent insensibility, during which his old friend “Billy Dawson” entered the room. In a little time he aroused himself, and greeted the friend with a smile of recognition. Soon afterward he suddenly exclaimed, “Nurse, nurse, get ‘t sheets ready,” and expired.

11 One of the older preachers, visiting a circuit place for the first time after he became superannuated, informed his hostess that he was now become a supernumerary, and should remain, as a resident in the circuit town, probably for the remainder of his life; adding, what he perhaps thought would be agreeable intelligence, that “he should often come out to preach there, though he was a supernumerary.” “Supernumerary!” echoed the old lady, “supernumerary! Why I always thought that meant one more than was wanted.” How the old man brooked the hint, tradition saith not.

12 Dr. Hannah mentions the following circumstance in his “Memorials.” It is strikingly characteristic of the man: -- “Mr. Lessey was prevailed upon, in the autumn of 1828, to try for a short time the efficacy of the spa at Admeston for the alleviation of the rheumatic complaint, with which he continued to be affected. [He had also, in June of that year, suffered from what is usually called a stroke of the sun – in reality nervous exhaustion, brought on by walking in much pain to his Sunday appointment in the heat of the day – which had seriously affected his general health.] He derived considerable benefit from it, but he generally seemed most successful when he sought health and ease in the prosecution of his accustomed labors. It is related that, in the month of March, 1829, he had a severe attack of fever, which confined him to his bed one Sunday until evening. He then rose, sent for a chaise, repaired to the chapel, where he preached an excellent sermon, on the occasion of the death of one of the oldest leaders of the society, from Nehemiah vii, 1: “He was a faithful man, and feared God above many.” A bold remedy this for a fever. But it was in the course of his allotted duty, and it appears to have been efficacious.”

13 Robert Hall, by the way, was not given to compliment. Once, when the paroxysms of pain, to which he was all his life subject, were so increasing upon him that it was deemed important for him to consult an eminent physician in London, he took the opportunity of hearing the Rev. Dr. _____.

Self-abased, and dissatisfied with himself, he returned to Leicester, called together the official members of the church, and insisted upon resigning his office, from which step it seemed as though no argument could move him. Before the interview was closed, (and it was on the Saturday evening, by the way,) a minister of the same persuasion, from a neighboring town, called upon Mr. Hall, who immediately proposed to him to occupy his pulpit in this strait. The visitor, who had a considerable share of vanity, was elated at the proposal, but thought it becoming to make many refusals and protestations of his unfitness, &c. These were all silenced, however, by Mr. Hall’s peremptory, “Sir, you must preach.” Mr. Hall attended, and accompanied the reverend gentleman into the vestry at the close of the service. “Sir, I am your debtor, unspeakably your debtor, sir,” said Mr. Hall, the friends around listening with astonishment, for, sooth to say, the sermon had been remarkable for little beyond its pedantry and nothingness. “Sir, your sermon has done me good; it has broken a snare in which the devil had entangled me. I had been up to London, sir, and had heard that great man, Dr. _____, and was so mortified with myself that I

resolved never to preach again. But, sir, I have heard you and now, sir, I shall preach again with some comfort.” 14 In writing these sketches, for the material of which I have had to depend solely upon memory, I have been frequently struck with the comparative facility with which the character and substance of morning discourses can be recalled, as distinguished from those delivered by the same preachers on the evenings of the same days. It is an evidence of the uniformity of plan and purpose which distinguishes the English preachers. Physiologically, the fact might perhaps be made to support some curious theories, were this the place to prosecute the inquiry.

15 The following will afford a key to the manner in which Dr. Clarke often preached; and there can be little wonder that the word from his lips was accompanied with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. His daughter had requested him to repeat a sermon he had preached some years before, from Daniel ii. 11-35, to which he replied that he had not even a note of the sermon. His daughter expressed her surprise that he could preach a sermon, of that character, involving the most minute particulars of the geographical position of empires, their political and chronological events, &c., without some notes; to which he replied: --”Mary, I had the whole world before me as clear as noonday. I felt as if I was standing upon the world, not in it; it was all spread before the eye of my mind; I saw it all, and therefore could describe it all.” On its being joined, “Then, father, I should imagine that you saw also the stone cut out without hands;” “ he answered with energy, yes, Mary, I felt, while I was dwelling on the power of God, and on his mercy as revealed in Christ for the salvation of man, as if I was taking hold of the pillars of eternity, and on them I hung the truth of God, which never can be shaken; and his mercy which it declared, and which can never know an end.” -- Memoir.

16 Life of Dr. Clarke, page 600

17 As distinguished from Robert Montgomery

18 Perhaps there is nothing merely external on which the judgment of a boy is so much at fault as the comparative height of the larger boys and adults with whom he associates. Every man looking back to his youth, is apt to think that “there were giants in those days;” or, revisiting, after an absence of twenty years, the school of his boyhood, thinks the pupils dwarfish as compared with those of his own day. The impression is, however, erroneous, as a record of the average stature of the two periods would show. From the same universal impression, probably, arises the belief, equally erroneous, that our forefathers were much taller and more muscular, generally, than ourselves. The writer, a few years ago, had an opportunity of inspecting the skeleton of an ancient Briton, dug from a tumulus in the north of England, which, from certain memorials inclosed in the coffin, (said coffin being the trunk of a large oak tree cut in two longitudinally, the lesser section forming the lid, and the other, rudely hollowed out, serving for the reception of the body,) was demonstrated to be upward of two thousand years old. The skeleton was black from the action of the tannin in the oak, but was in admirable preservation, even much of the hair remaining on the skull. The height, however, was barely five feet ten inches, though the chest was full and well arched.

19 I humbly conceive he is not far wrong in his estimate of Pearson. When once the somewhat peculiar and antiquated style of the author is mastered, and that is no very difficult task, the book is truly marrow and fatness. A close study of it would improve and enrich any man’s ministry, who had not before dived into its treasury of thought and argument.

20 The following example of an extraordinarily gracious influence accompanying this service is related in the Memoir of the Rev James Wood: -- In the beginning of the year 1788, a remarkable manifestation of grace and mercy was experienced at the renewal of the covenant. It was, indeed, a time to be remembered. “Never in my life,” says Mr. Wood, “had I seen so much evidence of the divine influence, on such an occasion. After having read the ‘Directions for renewing our covenant with God,’ I advised the people seriously and deeply to consider the importance of the solemn engagement they were about to make; and that they might not do it rashly, I proposed giving them a few moments for consideration and prayer. During the time of silence, (which at the most, I apprehend, did not exceed five minutes,) the goodness of the Lord who made known to nearly all present; and I afterward heard of seven persons who, in that short interval, found either the pardoning or the perfect love of God.” One eminent saint who was present, the late Miss Mary Unwin, thus describes her own feelings on that memorable occasion: -- “My body could scarcely stand under the weight of glory that rested upon me. My spirit cried out, ‘Glory be to God the Father! Glory be to God the Son! Glory be to God the Holy Ghost! Every power of my soul united to call upon all the heavenly host to strike their golden harps and assist my mighty joys. My soul was so filled with God, and so near to heaven, as made me say, --

‘My soul its change shall scarcely know,
Made perfect first in love.’

Such a season had never been known, even by the oldest member of the society. The recollection of it is still delightful and refreshing to the very few who are yet alive.” 21 Memorials of South Africa. By Barnabas Shaw, Wesleyan Missionary, resident in the Country nearly twenty Years. Republished at the Methodist Book Concern in New York.

22 At the anniversary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, in 1834, Mr. Shaw gave an interesting account of the Kaffir tribe,, among whom he had labored. Speaking of their religions opinions, he said, that they imagine God lives in a cave on the eastern side of the earth, out of which the sun comes daily. They believe that men, dogs, elephants, &c., came out of that cave in the order mentioned at the creation. They expose their aged relatives to death. Mr. Shaw mentioned a case of a mother who was bound to a tree in a forest by her own son, after escaping twice, and allowed by him to perish, although he could hear her cries for food and water. They believed that one of their number could cause rain; and Mr. S. was obliged, on one occasion, to enter into a controversy with the “rain-maker,” who, when hard pressed to make rain at a time when the cattle were dying for want of water, said that the sound of the chapel-bell drove the rain away. After a special prayer meeting for rain by the Kafir Christians, it fell in great abundance. The females were very cruelly treated until Mr. Shaw obtained some laws to be passed in their favor; in which, out of gratitude, they gave him the name of Kaka labafars -- “ the shield of women.”

23 Among the “Notices” appended to the plan are the following: The Quarterly Fast will be observed on Friday, June 25, when public prayer meetings will be held in Oxford Road, George Street, and Radnor Street vestries, at eight o’clock in the morning, and at eight o’clock in the evening.

A Male Bible Class meets in Oxford Road vestry, every Monday evening, at eight o’clock; and a Female Bible Class, on Tuesday afternoon, at three o’clock, and at George Street, on Friday evening, at seven o’clock. The junior children are catechized and instructed in Oxford Road, George Street, and Radnor Street vestries, every Saturday afternoon, at three o’clock. These classes are accessible to all young people and children belonging to our congregations, and they are affectionately invited and urged to attend.

The Local Preachers’ Library remains, as formerly, at Grosvenor street vestry; and as the use of it is still common to the preachers in the Third and Fifth circuits, the brethren are urged to avail themselves of this great advantage, and to give attendance to reading.” 24 It was stated some time since in an English paper, (the Wesleyan,) that the number of sermons delivered weekly by the traveling preachers, is 3951, or 205,452 in the year; the number by the local preachers is 11,641 weekly, or 605,302 in the year. The number of miles annually traveled by the traveling preachers, in their regular work, is 319,092; number of miles annually traveled by the local preachers, 2,917,418: total, 3,261,140 miles, a distance equal to one hundred and thirty times the circumference of the globe.
