

A Clear Issue. The great issue to be submitted to the country was stated by the Prime Minister with that lucidity and logical weight of which he is such a master. 'All this talk about the duty or the right of the House of Lords to refer measures to the people is, in the line of our practical and actual experience, the hollowest outcry of political cant. The House of Lords have deliberately chosen this ground. They have elected to set at naught, in regard to finance, the unwritten, time-honoured conventions of our Constitution. In so doing, whether they foresaw it or not, they have opened out a wider and a more far-reaching issue.' 'For the first time in English history the grant of the whole of the ways and means for the Supply and service of the year—a grant in aid at the request of the Crown to the Crown—has been intercepted and nullified by a body which admittedly has no power to increase or to diminish one single tax or to propose any substitute or alternative for any one of them.'

The Dissolution of Parliament. Mr. ASQUITH poured merciless ridicule on the proposal of Lord Lansdowne that the Government should bring in a new Budget and submit it for the approval or rejection of the House of Lords. This would be to recognise the right of the House of Lords, not only to reject, but also to amend the financial arrangements of the year. The only Constitutional course is to advise the Crown to dissolve Parliament. This has been done, and His Majesty has accepted the proposal. If the present Government is returned to power, its first act will be to re-impose as from last week the taxes and duties which were embodied in the Finance Bill, and to validate all its collections and deductions. But chaos already reigns at the Customs House. In the meantime the Government will have to borrow largely, and what will be the ultimate loss to the country is at present incalculable.

Pedants or Patriots.

Referring to Mr. Austen Chamberlain's statement that the distinction between what was legal and what was constitutional was mere pedantry, Mr. Asquith said it was pedantry of that kind which made and saved the liberties of England, and as pedants like Pym and Seldon and Somers rescued the House of Commons from the domination of the Crown, largely by power of the purse, so the usurpations of the House of Lords would be ended. Mr. Balfour cut a poor figure in reply. He was silent in regard to his own repeated statements that finance belongs to the Commons alone. His usual cleverness availed him not against the overwhelming indictment of the Premier and the resolution was adopted by a majority of 216. The vote was taken some hours earlier than the Government whips expected or the majority would have been considerably larger.

Facing the Enemy. THANK God, the heather is on fire at last. In 1890, as a young but ardent politician, the writer looked forward to seeing the Liberal Parliament deal drastically with the veto of the Lords, but the intervention of the Queen and the innate conservatism of Mr. Gladstone averted the conflict, and we have been suffering the consequences ever since. Mr. Gladstone himself came to see that the question would have to be faced, and declared in his last speech in the House of Commons, 'The issue which is raised between a deliberative assembly, elected by the votes of more than 6,000,000 people, and a deliberative assembly occupied by many men of virtue, by many men of talent, of course with considerable diversities and varieties, is a controversy which, when once raised, must go forward to an issue.' It has been raised as Mr. Gladstone never dreamed it could be, and it is unthinkable that the people of this country can fail in this supreme crisis to vindicate their inalienable rights under free and representative institutions.

The Stake for Primitive Methodists.

There is no church in the land more vitally concerned in this great issue than our own. We are the Church of the people and of the rural districts. We have everything to lose and nothing to gain under Protection, and if the Peers were to win, Protection must follow. We are a Temperance Church, and the triumph of the Lords means the dominance of the Trade. It is to the brewers as much as to the landed interest that we owe the destruction of the Budget. We suffer more cruelly and more widely from the Balfourian Education Acts than any other denomination. The triumph of the Peers would mean that scorpions would replace the whips which scourge us now in the villages of England. We are largely a landless people, and the victory of Toryism at this juncture would mean that all hope of our people getting back to the land would be destroyed. But that is not all. If the Tory party is returned, it will mean the destruction of the representative principle on which our liberties rest, and reaction would reign supreme.

To Vote Tory is to—

Budget, they can at any time destroy a Government, and a Liberal Government would be completely at their mercy. Mr. Balfour's pretence that this power would rarely be exercised is too flimsy to require an answer. No Liberal Budget can ever again be satisfactory to the Lords, for we are pledged to great measures of Social Reform which cannot be carried out without touching wealth and land and liquor. We venture respectfully to ask any Primitive Methodist who can for a moment contemplate the idea of voting Tory at this election, whether he can face the moral consequences involved. Everything he holds dear as a Christian, a Nonconformist, and a Primitive Methodist is imperilled by the return to power of the Tory party. To vote Tory is to vote for Protection, to vote for Drink, to vote for the indefinite continuance of the iniquitous Education Acts and the subversion of our National Freedom.

Speeches and a Manifesto.

THE Executive of the Free Church Council has issued an important manifesto calling the immediate and serious attention of Free Churchmen to the momentous issues now at stake. The reforms to which the Council is committed are rendered impossible by the persistent action of the House of Lords. In regard to Education Clericalism must be fought or it will destroy our religious liberties. The action of the Lords in regard to National Temperance is similarly reviewed, and great questions of social welfare are also involved in this election. The veto of the Peers, as the great obstacle to reform, must be removed and nothing must deter Free Churchmen from striving with all their might for the triumph of the ethical and religious programme for which they stand. It is a vigorous and decisive pronouncement. Mr. Lloyd George's speech on Friday was a stirring popular appeal, and Mr. Winston Churchill's Lancashire speeches are magnificent in the weight and force and momentum of their oratory, and his campaign must have a great influence on the election. The greatest crisis within living memory is upon us. Let every man do his duty, and may God defend the Right!

Stonelaying of New School Hall and Class Rooms, Sandiacre, Long Eaton Circuit.

MORE than twenty years ago the Primitive Methodist Society at Sandiacre vacated their old chapel in Mill Lane (built in 1832) for a rented chapel (formerly Free Methodist) on the main street. Under the ministry of the Rev. H. Ross, a site of land in the midst of a growing population was secured and paid for, and a good start made with a new building fund. On Saturday last the memorial stones of a school hall and class rooms—the first half of the complete project—were laid by Mrs. John Crowe, Mrs. Hy. Harper, Mrs. J. Rice, Mr. A. Crowe, senr., Mr. Urban Doar, Mr. W. Bailey, and Mr. J. Telforth, who together contributed £55. Rev. James Flanagan gave the address in the United Methodist Church, kindly lent. There was a great public tea, and a well-attended public meeting in the evening, presided over by C. Bowler, Esq., Nottingham. The speakers were Revs. James Flanagan, C. Makin, Wesleyan, and E. W. Walker, U.M.C. Revs. E. W. Pape, and F. Winterburn, and Messrs. J. Crowe and H. Harper also took part in the meeting. The financial results of the day in cash and promises amounted to over £154. The new buildings, for which Mr. H. Harper is the architect, include a bright and commodious hall, well adapted for public worship, four class rooms, three of which can be opened to the hall, kitchen, etc., etc., the contract price of which is £725. A good site is being reserved for a church at a later period.

Cakes and Puddings.

ONE of the most successful fruit puddings that can be made is the Cakeoma Sultana Pudding. It has the excellent flavour of a well-made pudding with the added advantage that it is light and easy to digest.

SULTANA PUDDING.

- 1 packet of Cakeoma.
- 6 ozs. fine chopped Suet.
- 1 pinch of Salt.
- 1 or 2 Eggs.
- ½ lb. Sultana Raisins.
- A third to half a glass of Milk.

METHOD.

Empty the Cakeoma into a large basin or mixing bowl, rub in the Suet and Salt, then add the Raisins. Beat up the Eggs and add them together with the Milk, and well mix; then put it into a well-greased pudding mould, tie a cloth over it and steam or boil for three hours. Serve hot with a sweet sauce. It is sufficient for about a dozen persons. For a smaller pudding, the quantities should be proportionately reduced.

Next week a recipe for a Fig Cake.

Cakeoma is sold only in 3½d. packets by all Grocers and Stores everywhere.

Table Talk.

WE are regretfully compelled to hold over many items of church news in consequence of exceptional pressure upon our space to-day.

THE Mayor of Derby, Dr. H. A. Bemrose, will give a reception to the delegates and their hosts and hostesses in connection with the Sunday School Triennial Conference to be held at Derby, Oct. 8th to 11th, 1910.

THERE are few churches in London that are doing better work than our mission at Clapton Park Tabernacle under the plodding ministry of the Rev. J. K. Ellwood. The mission is a veritable hive of industry, and all its organisations are kept in constant exercise under the personal superintendence of its energetic minister. In addition to all the ordinary work of the church Clapton Park Tabernacle is a great centre of social work, and this service is pursued year in and year out without any conspicuous Connexional demonstration. For the forthcoming Christmas season Mr. Ellwood is proposing to provide a Christmas dinner for 1,000 of the poorest of Lower Clapton, to give 200 families one cwt. of coal, 250 families a parcel of grocery in addition to a tea, and some clothing to 150 poor women, and a tea and toys with entertainment for 400 children. Our readers will, no doubt, read the advertisement in another column, as also the appeal from the Rev. W. Glover for the Edinburgh Mission, and will cheer our brethren in these Connexional centres, and through them impart happiness to many others.

MANY friends, more particularly those in the Liverpool District, will note with deep regret the death of Mr. Edward Woodhall, treasurer of Prince's Avenue Church, Liverpool. We hope to give a notice of his life and work in our next issue.

WE deeply regret to learn of the decease of Mr. R. H. Lancelley, a prominent official of George St. church, Chester, and ex-Sheriff of the city.

THE Lord Chancellor has placed Mr. T. D. Fenby, of Bridlington, upon the Commission of the Peace for the East Riding. Mr. Fenby is a working blacksmith, a most acceptable local preacher, Endeavour president, member of the Bridlington Borough Council, and one of the leading citizens.

MR. ALBERT E. WILLMAN, of Watford, has taken the degree of B.Sc. at London University in the second class honours. Mr. Willman is a local preacher, and is a devoted worker in the Queen's Road church. He has had a very successful career. Three years since he gained a scholarship under the Hertford County Council, and at the same time won a Grocers' Scholarship of the City of London, of the united value of £100 per annum. It is his intention to devote himself to foreign mission work, and he is recommended by his circuit as a candidate for the ministry with a view to his being trained for the medical department of our missions.

MR. J. G. MARRIOTT, of Monkseaton, is rendering exceptional help to the Connexion during the Centenary years. During the present year he has presided at public meetings, averaging three per fortnight, presided over the May Morning London Missionary gathering, and has laid no less than six foundation stones. Last Sunday week he preached at Rehoboth Chapel, Bradford, opened their bazaar on the Monday afternoon, took the chair at a meeting at Silver Road Hill, Leeds, at night, and on the Wednesday presided at the 'At Home' at the Central church, Newcastle. Mr. Marriott has for many years given a definite proportion of his income to the Church.

THE Rev. E. J. T. Bagnall wishes us to announce that as members of the London Council desire to support the Prime Minister at the Albert Hall on Friday, December 10th, there will be no meeting of the Council that evening, nor of the Executive.

A CENTENARY bazaar is to be held next Easter at Silsden, when the principal stalls will be named after connexional celebrities, Hugh Bourne, William Clowes, John Fleisher, and Sir William P. Hartley. The Silsden friends have also been fortunate in securing the promise of Miss Hartley to open the bazaar on the first day.

In a note inserted last week pertaining to the splendid result of the efforts made by the Manley Street church, Hindley circuit, we were in error in one or two particulars. The promise made by Sir W. P. Hartley was 20 per cent. on all moneys raised up to May, 1909, and his cheque for £68 18s. 3d. has been duly received by the minister, the Rev. J. J. Harrison. The value of the new building, too, was reported as £800; it should have been £1,000.

MR. JOSEPH ECCLES and family, of Tadcaster, wish to acknowledge with gratitude the numerous expressions of sympathy received in the loss they have sustained in the death of Mrs. Eccles.

'The Christian World Pulpit' of November 17th contains what has been described as a striking and up-to-date sermon on 'Modern Herods,' by the Rev. Arthur Wood, of Great Yarmouth.

MR. J. SHARE, of Forest Town, Mansfield, has been elected President of the Mansfield and District Sunday School Union. Mr. Share is a local preacher in the Mansfield circuit, and the first Primitive Methodist to hold the position.

The 'Primitive Methodist Leader' may be ordered through any Newsagent or at Railway Bookstalls.

WORK AND WARFARE.

The Age of Miracles.

'The age of miracles is past,' say critics of Christianity, and some faint-hearted Christians are themselves tempted to believe it. After reading the Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, they sigh and wish they had lived when Christ trod the holy fields of Galilee, and raised the dead to life, and fed the hungry themselves, and healed the sick, and cast out devils, and snatched the sinner's chains and set the prisoner free. It is such people who sing with conviction that dreary ditty of Palgrave, that somehow found its way into 'The Primitive Methodist Hymnal':—

Thou say'st, 'Take up thy cross,
O man, and follow Me';
The night is black, the feet are slack;
Yet we would follow Thee.

But, O dear Lord, we cry,
That we Thy face could see!
Thy blessed face one moment's space—
Then might we follow Thee!

Dim tracts of time divide
Those golden days from me;
Thy voice comes strange o'er years of change;
How can we follow Thee?

As if Christ's face were not reflected in the faces of all those who are wholeheartedly His, and as if His voice were not heard in every voice that brings sinners to Him, and binds up the broken hearts of His suffering ones! Our Christ is not an historical figure of far-away Galilee, but is a living and a present Christ, and the age of miracles is not past.

If it is, then the age of Christianity is past, for Christ has lost His power. Christianity cannot live and propagate itself without continual miracles.

What has led me to raise the question is the reading of Mr. Harold Begbie's new book, 'Broken Earthenware' (Hodder and Stoughton, 6s.). Mr. Begbie is a brilliant and versatile impressionist journalist, who has tried his hand, with no great success, at novel-writing, and 'Broken Earthenware' is not a novel, but it is far more thrilling than a novel, as truth is stranger than fiction. It is a series of studies of conversions in a London slum, largely through the means of a Salvationist adjutant—a beautiful and delicate girl. She prayed at the bedside of dying men and women in those lodging-houses; she taught children to pray; she went into public-houses and persuaded the violent blackguards of the town to come away; she pleaded with the most desperate ones at street corners; she preached in the open streets on Sundays; she stood guard over the doors of men mad for drink and refused to let them out.

Mr. Begbie has interviewed a number of the trophies of this young woman's heroic evangelism, and this is the conclusion he deliberately delivers:—

'There is a record of individual religion manifesting itself in modern London among men with whom a theologian would scarcely pause for a moment's discussion, but who may seem to the reader, nevertheless, of that very order of simple souls chosen by the Light of the World for the central revolution of human history.

'The purpose of this book, which I venture to describe as a footnote in narrative to Professor James's famous work (*The Varieties of Religious Experience*) is to bring home to men's minds this fact concerning conversion, that, whatever it may be, conversion is the only means by which a radically bad person can be changed into a radically good person.

'It produces not a change, but a revolution in character. It does not alter, it creates a new personality. The phrase, 'a new birth,' is not a rhetorical hyperbole, but a fact of the physical kingdom.

'There is no medicine, no Act of Parliament, no moral treatise, and no invention of philanthropy which can transform a man radically bad into a man radically good. If the State, burdened and shackled by its horde of outcasts and sinners, would march freely and efficiently to its goal, it must be at the hands of religion that relief is sought. There is nothing else; there can be nothing else. Science despairs of these people, and pronounces them 'hopeless' and 'incurable.'

In the slum that was the scene of Mr. Begbie's investigations, a mortuary chapel had to be built. The rooms of the houses are so crowded that directly a person dies, the body must be moved. It is sickening even to read of the evil conditions, and the evil people who live under the conditions.

First of the modern miracles chronicled by Mr. Begbie is the conversion of 'The Poscher,' the ex-prize fighter, who, the days of his triumphs over, sinks lower and lower through drink and is pulled up at last by the power of Christ acting through the fragile Salvationist lassie when he is on the brink of wife-murder. He was drunk when converted, but the miracle was instantaneous and complete, and its effects were permanent. The past dropped clear away from him. An immense weight lifted from his brain. He felt light as air. He felt clean. He felt happy. All the ancient words used to symbolize the spiritual experience of instant and complete regeneration may be safe yet to describe his feelings, but they all fail to convey with satisfaction to himself the immediate and delicious joy which ravished his consciousness. He cannot say what it was. All he knows is that there, at the penitent form, he was dismantled of old horror and clothed afresh in newness and joy.

And here comes another feature which is constantly recurring in these modern miracles:—

'The wonder of the preacher is what Salvationists call his love for souls.' This is a phrase which means the intense and concentrated compassion for the unhappiness of others which visits a man who has discovered the only means of obtaining happiness. He did not move away from the neigh-

bourhood which had witnessed his shame, but lived there the life of a missionary. Every hour of his spare time, every shilling he could spare for his home, was given to saving men with whom he had companied in every conceivable baseness and misery. I never met a quieter soul so set upon the bitter and despairing task of rescue.

Here is another miracle, the transformation of 'O.B.D.' which is short for the local nickname, 'Old Blind Drunk.' Born of parents both of whom were sodden with drink, dosed with drink from his babyhood, even his wife, who was not a drunkard, said, 'You see, he's been used to it from a little 'un; it's meat and drink to him. I really don't think he'd be good for anything if he was to give it up, I don't really.' But the girl adjutant knew better. He was dragged into a meeting with a procession collected by the preacher, and the strong hand of the Lord gripped him. 'Old Blind Drunk' went up to the penitent form. He explained afterwards, 'All of a sudden it took me that I'd had God, and got Him to make me like Joe. It took me like that. I just felt, all of a sudden, determined to find God. Determined. Others will understand that God was determined to find 'O.B.D.' And here is the amazing thing, and yet not amazing—'O.B.D.' stood firm, the appetite for drink was gone, he went in and out of public houses on the track of sinners, and was pressed with offers of drink. A mocking workman flung into his face a pot of beer that he had refused, but year after year 'O.B.D.' stood firm as a rock, and 'this once ruined creature was now happy and whole.'

'The days of miracles are past!' Where is our faith? Where are our eyes? Miracles such as those recorded by Mr. Begbie are happening at our own South East London Mission, at our Whitechapel Mission, in scores of other missions of all denominations, in the course of the work of hundreds of churches, on every foreign mission field. The Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, and in the London, the Birmingham, the Newcastle, the Liverpool of to-day miracles as marvellous as those of Galilee and Judaea are being produced by the same Almightily Power. It is for present-day Christians to take the power of the Spirit take possession of their own souls, to show fearless courage, to open by prayer the sluice-gates of faith, and then, where there is now one miracle of grace, there will be a thousand.

United Centenary Meeting at Grimsby.

THURSDAY last was a great day in Grimsby. Despite the down-pour of rain all the afternoon and evening the Centenary gatherings at Ebenezer were a great success. On the preceding Sunday, the Rev. John Welford, Vice-President of Conference, preached at Flottergate in the morning and at Ebenezer in the evening. On Thursday afternoon the proceedings commenced with a conference, when Mr. C. K. Watkinson presided and delivered an inspiring address. The Rev. John Welford opened a discussion dealing with the methods of securing the best response to the Centenary appeal. The audience filled the body of the church and followed the discussion with much interest. A public tea followed, which was well attended. At 6.20 Sir Wm. P. Hartley was announced. He came with a smiling heartiness which at once captured all hearts. Then after a few minutes came the Mayor and Mayoress of Grimsby (COUN. R. W. and Mrs. Roberts), who are both connected with Ebenezer church and held in well deserved esteem for their liberality towards all our institutions. The Mayor wore his chain of office and was accompanied by his sergeant and many of the Corporation, whom he had officially invited to support him, calling attention in his circular as a reason for his invitation, to the fact that Sir Wm. P. Hartley was a philanthropist of more than national repute and that the church over which Sir William presided had played during its century of existence a leading part in elevating the masses of this country. In the reception which followed Sir William, the Mayor and Mayoress, and Rev. J. Welford shook hands with more than 400 people.

The evening meeting was well attended and full of interest. The chairman, Mr. Thomas Robinson, J.P., knew his business well. His remarks gave the right tone to the meeting. The Rev. J. Welford excelled himself in his effective address. Sir William's speech had a very wide outlook. He has a consciousness of the largeness and responsibilities of the Methodist Church which seems to explain his enterprise in regard to our own connexion. And as he proceeded with his address there was a close, and sometimes a strained attention. The tones were quiet, but they were penetrated with a subtle spirituality that went straight to the heart of the meeting. The promises which were distributed might seem a little disappointing, being filled up for between 240 or 250 only; but then the Centenary work in Grimsby has been carefully organized for some time past. At the close the Rev. J. Jopling acknowledged indebtedness to all who helped to make the occasion successful, especially to the Mayor and Mayoress, the 'Grimsby News' for permitting him to write up Centenary affairs, and to the Tramway Company for exhibiting bills in the cars free of charge. Collections with donations will leave a substantial balance for the District Centenary Fund.

Shareshbury

On November 17th a convention was held at Ludwell for the deepening of the spiritual life of our members. At 4.15 a service was held, the preacher being Rev. W. Shaw, of Salisbury. This was followed by a public tea, when about sixty sat down. At 6.45 a public meeting was held, the chairmen being Messrs. J. Sims and A. W. Mayo. Miss Greenwood gave a solo. Rev. E. Rogers dwelt upon the subject of 'The Fulness of the Indwelling Spirit.' Rev. W. Shaw followed with a plea for Christ to have absolute control of our lives.

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Emptying an old circuit chest one day I came upon a pile of papers which had been carelessly thrown in with old class books, minute books, and much useless lumber. The first impulse was to burn it all, but a desire to see what it was about saved such sacrilege, and resulted in many hours of deep, and at times of breathless interest in perusing and arranging the material thus obtained. By and by it became apparent that amongst these circuit reports, official accounts and minutes, there was an almost complete record of the 'Norman Isles Mission,' from 1839 to 1843. Interesting as that record is, it is perhaps less important than the revelation given of the human side of the work, and especially of the character and qualities of one who afterwards came to high honour and fame as a Primitive Methodist missionary in Queensland, and whose nephew to-day holds the highest position in the gift of our Church.

The Rev. Robert Hartley, uncle of Sir William P. Hartley, this year's President of Conference, during the years 1839 to 1843 laboured assiduously and successfully in Jersey and Alderney, and it is from his letters principally that I shall quote in this article.

For real human interest and vivid illustration of the practical working of a Primitive Methodist mission in those early days these letters are unique in my experience. What a flood of light they throw upon the conditions in which the work was done; aye, and upon the spirit of the men who did it. What patience they had! What a passion for souls! What a noble humility! What a splendid devotion! Of the difficulties that had to be faced there is abundant evidence here, but most amazing of all is the matter-of-fact way in which they are accepted; an attitude only equalled by the vigour and resource with which they are overcome. The following minute No. 8 of the Jersey preparatory Quarterly Meeting held May 20th and 28th, 1839, is illuminating: 'That the next Quarter Day be held August 19th in Bro. Hartley's room at 4 o'clock in the morning.' Min. 14 of the same dates is of more than passing interest. 'That we have printed plans next quarter.' 'The September quarterly meeting of the same year passed the following resolution, which indicates not only the free and homely way in which things had been done, but the grasping by a strong and orderly mind of the need of the situation. Min. 17: 'That as the General Quarterly Meeting never in-

formed us, we request them to let us know who is the superintendent and book steward of the Islands.'

Very quaint are some of the expressions used, especially in the explanatory remarks and accompanying letters which were always sent together with the report. The following will explain itself. It is written on the June report for 1839. It only needs to be said that Rev. J. Wright left the islands at this time.

'Dear Brethren.—We shall want Bro. Wright (should you remove him) to stay with us four weeks longer than the time specified in the minutes for preachers removing, to assist us in the missionary and camp meeting services, and by obliging us with your sanction to this, as well as the other requests, we shall take it as a great favour. May God direct you to put us all in our right places, and may the Islands and the circuit rise higher and higher till we all rise into Glory.' Amen.

From subsequent correspondence one gathers that the foregoing request was not granted, and that Mr. Hartley's father served as missionary deputation. This led to a slight misunderstanding as to expenses which is finally disposed of by the following naive 'remark' on a subsequent report:—'In reference to the Board misunderstanding the minute respecting Father's coming I do not see how they could if they took proper notice of the minute. If I had thought anything of the sort, I would never have charged the expenses, but as they have paid them, I feel much obliged to them, as it would have (been) heavy for me to have paid them all. The Captain gave him his fare and fees back which I have returned, as I have received the intelligence of it from my Father.'

As one peruses these documents very varying emotions are stirred in one's heart. The ministers had to be at every part of the work; they were their own circuit stewards, they let the sittings, they led the classes, they collected the funds, they often had to act as judges and peace-makers, and all this in addition to attending numerous meetings, and building chapels, for which they had to beg the money and render a strict account of all their doings to a watchful, if distant, General Quarterly Board.

In reference to the Jersey chapel opening, Mr. Hartley writes, 'We had good congregations at the chapel opening on Dec. 6th, 8th, and 9th. Collections 23. . . I have just let 54 sittings at 1s. 1jd. and 30 at 9d. . . We have had prayer meetings at 5 and 6 o'clock every morning since it was opened, service every night at 7. . . Oh, brethren, continue to pray for us. . . I have got nearly £100, and I want and must have more than other £50 which I have no fear of getting if I could only devote my time to picking it up, but during the quarter we have had several conversions at Jersey. I am so fully employed that I am almost crazy sometimes. . . and now we are expecting a mighty move. O Lord, revive thy work. . . R. Hartley.'

One could fill pages with illustrations drawn from these letters of the 'labours more abundant' in which these noble men were engaged. It may prove of interest at this time to quote the arrangements made for Christmas Day, 1840, and onwards. Min. 12, 'That we have a service at 5 o'clock on Christmas Day in the morning. That Bro. Thomas preach short, and prayer meeting be held after, and that Bro. Hartley preach at 6 at night. 13. That a protracted meeting be held to commence with the Christmas Day morning service and to continue till the 3rd of January, and longer if needful, and that the prayers of our English brethren be earnestly and affectionately solicited. O Lord, revive Thy work. 14. That



LONG STREET, SCOTTER.

there be a service every morning at 5 to conclude at 6. Every evening to commence at 7. That the services consist of singing and prayer, with exhortation, etc., under the direction of Bro. Hartley.'

These men believed in prayer and backed their prayers with faith and works; no wonder they succeeded. And yet they had seasons of depression, and almost of despair. Many of their converts proved to be unstable, and even some who became officials neglected the duties they had undertaken, and failed to promote the work of God. The report of the Jersey Preparatory Quarterly Meeting for March, 1841, is on many grounds worth quoting in full. Spare, however, is limited. It interests us especially by the frankness with which unpleasant facts are faced, and the unaffected yearning that breathes through it for a deeper work of grace. 'We have to praise God for several remarkable conversions during the year. . . we have encouraging prospects. . . there is nothing wanting among us but divine power and suitable effort to get it.'

One must omit many things that are of more than passing interest. The circuit accounts which always accompany the report are given in great detail and contain many curious and amusing entries.

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The above are a few items culled almost at random from two or three out of many such accounts. A most engaging frankness in regard to personal desires and experiences appears throughout. It will doubtless prove of general interest, however, if, leaving out much that is important, and much that throws a flood of light upon the causes and conditions of success and failure in the work, I conclude with the account given by Rev. R. Hartley himself of his wedding, which was celebrated on May 11th, 1840, at Guernsey. He says, 'My wedding produced a little excitement in Guernsey. The minister has told a lady since that he had more people to see me married, though at six in the morning, than he often had to preach to. We had a very pleasant morning. The Baptist and Bible Christian ministers were with us, and we had an excellent prayer meeting after breakfast. The night before we had a glorious fellowship meeting in the chapel. On the wedding day we sailed for Jersey where at half-past-seven in the evening I preached from Prov. xv. 6 and led one of my classes from which I had been absent three weeks.' And here for the present we must leave this Romance of Reality.

'The Primitive Church and the Primacy of Rome.' By Prof. Georgis Bartoli. Hodder and Stoughton. 6s.

THIS book will be read with the deepest interest by all who have observed the development of modernism within the Roman Church. Professor Bartoli is a scholar, a scientist, a theologian, and a journalist, and he is also a Christian of great courage and noble character. During a large part of his life he has been a faithful and devoted member of the Society of Jesus. But two years since he voluntarily separated himself from the Roman Church for reasons of conscience, and because doctrinal accusations were brought against him. This volume contains the substance of some of the doctrines, dogmas, claims, rites and usages of the Roman Church concerning which the Professor, after deep and prolonged study, has become convinced that the teaching of the Church of Rome is not the theology of the Bible or of the Primitive Christian Church. The chapter on 'The Democracy of the Church,' is especially remarkable for its brilliant exposition, and for the author's verdict on this subject. In the battle with clericalism this book will be a valuable ally, and every man who values Protestantism will do well to carefully ponder its contents.—P. N.

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'The Dates of Genesis.' By Rev. F. A. Jones. Price 3s. net. Published by The Kingston Press, 4 Southampton Row, W.C.

THE aim of this book is to show the importance of chronology for a proper understanding of the Scriptures. The author states that 'we cannot be said to know much about a man so long as we are unable to associate him with some definite period of the world's history, for until we can do so we cannot relate him to his contemporaries.' He then carefully examines the chief systems of chronology that deal with the Book of Genesis—The Hebrew, the Septuagint (Alexandrian and Vatican), that of Josephus, and the Samaritan, and shows that whilst there is and must be uncertainty, yet of these the Hebrew is the most reliable. He then takes a wider survey, and shows that the Hebrew is more reliable than the chronological systems of India, China, Chaldea, and Egypt. He does not, however, make Hebrew dates a basis for the doctrine of the truth and inspiration of Scripture. That doctrine is 'demonstrated by quite other arguments, such as the appeal it makes to conscience and the effort for good that has followed its acceptance—above all, by its relation to Christ' (p. 227). In the tenth chapter Mr. Jones discusses the relation of chronology to criticism. Here he travels beyond the Book of Genesis, and rightly so, for the principle he lays down respecting an author's relation to his times is applicable to all the sacred writers. The book is characterised by extensive reading, broad generalisations, and respectful treatment of the opinions of other men.—G. PARKIN.

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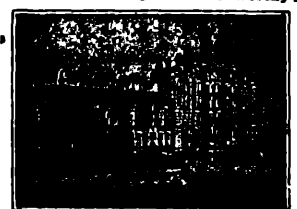
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SOME NOTABLE MEN AND WOMEN.

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REV. T. GRAHAM

A motor run from Scarborough to Gilling would out through three circuits. After leaving town, Saamer, Wykeham, Brompton, East Ayton, and Staition would be passed, all in the Scarborough First circuit. At Thornton-le-Dale the Pickering area would be entered. Two miles westward Pickering itself would be threaded, and straight driving would show Middleton and Wretton, leaving Marton on the left and Cropton and Hutton-le-Hole on the right. After Kirbymoorside the car would come to Newton in the Helmsley circuit, and, passing near Pockley, would take Helmsley town and thence to Oswaldkirk and Gilling.

Such a drive would be full of interest from several stand points. The antiquarian revels in these parts. So short a run would offer about a dozen castles, abbeys, and similar historic ruins for examination, Scarborough, Pickering, and Helmsley being still grand and imposing in their decay. The hills abound in barrows and military earthworks, thrown up probably by Danes, to keep off other invaders. A diversion of five miles through Cropton would bring a visitor to a Roman camp still in perfect formation.

But we are on the look-out for incidents and reminiscences of a religious character, and especially those pertaining to Primitive Methodism. Wesleyan and Primitive Methodism are both historically rich in this neighbourhood. The Mother Church found her first missionary to China in a farm just outside Pickering. The stone mark still to be seen in Burgate from which the first Primitive missionary delivered his message. One of the most impressive events of the recent Synod was an address by Conn. A. Moore from the same spot. A local preacher from Malton was the pioneer, and the date was probably in the summer of 1820. That we had a good seed-off in the town is evident from the opening of a chapel of considerable size the following year.

There are three chapels still to be seen in Pickering. The first stands in a yard. Pressing itself through repeated coverings of whitewash we can still discern the inscription, part of which is 'Providence Chapel, 1821.' Why the first builders gave the structure that name cannot be determined. The second chapel now belongs to the railway company, and is used for a temperance hall, and all the purposes for which some neutral building is useful in a small town. The third is the handsome structure on Potter Hill. It is a commodious building for the size of the town, but the strength of Primitive Methodism in the district demands the accommodation.

The happiest relations subsist between Wesleyans and Primitives. In most of the villages services are held in Wesleyan and Primitive chapels on alternate Sunday afternoons, and friends visit each other's places. There are only two Congregational churches in the district. Besides, we have the Anglican churches, and what they would do without Methodist attendants it is easy to guess. At Lockton, the vicar's churchwarden is a member with us, as was his father before him. The rector of one church within the circuit area is a son of the late Rev. W. Lister, a connexional officer, and another vicar was at one time a local preacher on the plan. He still maintains good relations with his former colleagues, and quite recently the brother planned at the Methodist chapel had the distinction of being taken to tea to the vicarage. Gradually Methodists are coming to their own in relation to

road to the 'Marishes,' and his youthful mind seems to have been deeply impressed with the fact that the farmers that day had boiled a whole moor sheep! He also recalls seeing the Rev. R. Tansfield in a wagon on the same ground fifty-five years ago. 'What a fine voice he had, and how he did sing!' exclaimed the old man. Mr. Soles says that in the early five-



MR. W. DONALD.



MR. SEDMAN.

feasts there was 'different deed' from what there is now. Men used to 'throw off their coats an' git up there at once!' There was a huge crowd at the Jubilee camp meeting on Appleton Common. In the midst of the preaching some of the baser sort set the ling on fire, and the preachers were too choked with dense smoke to proceed. Then the wind turned, and while the preachers resumed the services, the perpetrators



GROUP OF CHAPELS.

of the evil deed coughed and spluttered, and made their way off the Common. At another camp meeting a number of rough men gave trouble. The preachers were glad to see them for the benefit they might get. When the leader called for the prayer ring, he said, 'We will march to yon corner where the Philistines are,' but the Philistines, careful for what they regarded as safety, promptly changed quarters.

About half the present places on the circuit were missioned in the twenties or soon after. The other half appear to have been founded, or at least come to permanent strength about the middle of the last century. Most of the chapels date from the sixties. Sixty years ago a fine revival swept over the area. Some of the strongest men the circuit has had were converted as boys in that work of grace. Possibly, also, the agitation for greater freedom in Methodism did something about that time to strengthen the more democratic body. Wretton is one of the societies that date back to the earliest days. Visiting preachers are still entertained by Mr. W. Turnbull in a 'front room' that at one time was licensed for preaching. A beautiful story is told of the first Wretton chapel. Mr. George Hoggart, then an old man, said, 'He could not do much for the Lord. He was a wake an' stammering orator. But he could fettle up a house for Him.' And he did. Owning some property, he set to work to transform a stable into a place of worship. And he did it well. The chapel up the village was intended by Mr. Hoggart as a gift to Primitive Methodism, but his generous purpose was frustrated. Mr. J. Frank tells a good story of that old place. It appears that the pulpit was rather uncertain in stability. One preacher shouted and thumped and jumped in such a lively fashion that when the service closed and a few stood outside, Mr. Frank congratulated him on being there! Why? asked the preacher. And then the twinkle in Mr. Frank's eye revealed the pleasantry. It was feared the pulpit would give way.

Would do for Leeds.

The circuit really lies under the edge of the Moors, but a few places invade the ling and bracken. One of these is Stape, where farmers get a precarious living by reducing wild nature to order and fruitage. Even now intercourse between the lonely farms and town is very infrequent. For

at least fifty years, and probably much longer, preaching 'as been supplied. Two things may be said of the Stape people. They are shrewd and they are unconventional. James Hilday was a quaint man. Suddenly stopping a preacher, he asked, 'What o'clock is it by Pickering church, Mr. Frank?' Times compared, he uttered a homely exclamation and settled down again to listen. Once, when R. v. Charles



REV. J. HIRST.



MRS. HIRST.

Smith occupied the pulpit, James suddenly opened his eyes and asked, 'Where is Mr. — travelling now, Mr. Smith?' 'Leeds, I think, James.' 'Oh! Leeds. When, now, he may do vary well for Leeds, but he was nowt much for Stape!' Leeds friends, please notice!

If we cross the Moor for about a mile and a half we shall drop into Newton Dale, one of the most remarkable geological features in England. Services are held in several cottages in turn. Mr. — Nathan, Pickering, knows the old times. He tells of a Mr. Trowdale, a quaint, but acceptable and useful preacher. One day the topic was the affliction of Job. 'Poor Job!' the preacher cried, and flinging out both hands he smashed the lamp glasses on the pulpit sides. As the debris fell upon a youth below named Job the congregation smiled. He often rode home asleep on his mare, and that frequently in the early hours of the morning. True, he was a long way from everywhere, but he loved society and talk and he would start home late. What a man he was for shouting and singing! 'Another loup an' I'll be in glory!' he would exclaim. He knew the love and joy of God. Dying, he kept exclaiming, 'It's poverty has made me rich! it's poverty has made me rich!'

The Whim of a Woman.

On looking over the old books one sighs for the villages we used to occupy, but which were allowed to lapse. The difficulty of holding on half a century ago was greater than most can imagine to-day. Lockton furnishes a case in point, where happily precarious conditions were safely negotiated. The first chapel was built in 1849, as near as can now be ascertained. Before that date services were held in a building now used as a stable. The premises were very comfortable, and honour was due to the good lady who thus sheltered the little cause and entertained the preachers. But the hospitality had its serious disadvantage. When it suited her mood she turned the congregation out of doors, and her mood often depended upon her estimate of the preacher. In the village one can listen to glowing descriptions of the services in this building. There were some noble brethren in the little society. Mr. B. Brown describes some famous 'Shooters among 'em,' and if tested he can give practical illustrations! Mr. Ann Scott, Mr. Brown's grandmother, preached there. The first chapel was largely erected by voluntary labour. Mr. Warkington led the first load of bricks, and the father of Rev. John Swales the first load of lime. There was a Sunday school as far back as 1845. Mrs. Swales was a famous preacher, and from this village the R. v. J. Swales, of Horbury, sprang. Over a deep valley, but only a very short distance from Lockton as the crow flies, we come to Levensham. When the Primitives first visited this village, the clergyman, it is said, was of the sporting type. Every kind of influence has been brought to bear to the disadvantage of the cause. Happily without success



MR. B. BROWN.



MR. J. FRANK, J.P.

marriages and burials in their own chapels, but, on the one hand the inherent conservatism of the people, and on the other, the arts and devices used to frustrate the development long-ten out the process of change.

Philistines in Retreat.

But it is time to come to stories and reminiscences. Camp meetings are not what they were when it was a tradition and fact that Pickering never failed of converts on that day, but they are still a mighty power for evangelism. Mr. Robert Soles remembers the first camp meeting held at Thornton. In old age his recollections of the place and scenes are quite vivid. There was a great crowd in Allenby's 'swath field' on the



W. HARLAND.



MR. J. COATES.

The heroic fortitude of George Welburn is a credit to his church and to himself, and he is steadfastly supported by a few others. A high dignitary of the Anglican Church recently suggested to a member that the 'little chapel should be closed.' Instead of that, the membership is increasing. Some of these moorland farmers were driven from the lowlands by religious and social pressure, and the memories of early decisions for freedom are too vivid to allow of vacillation under more modern and subtle influences.

1835 and 1909.

Pickering has had some famous women preachers. Mrs. Swales exerted a powerful influence in her day. The names

and ministry of Mrs. Knaggs and Mrs. Farrow are still recalled by senior members. Mr. Stonehouse, of Roedale, himself a very old man, recently said of these two women, 'I don't know that they made fine sermons, but they were good talkers and folks liked to hear 'em.' Not an unworthy tribute! Pickering has an interesting connection with a love story Mr. Riton and his reviewers have given prominence to lately. When the Hartley lecturer at the Conference told the story of the demure young Quakeress who ran away from home to escape persecution and to marry a Primitive Methodist minister, a lady sitting next the writer turned and blushing whispered, 'What a shame to tell our family history like this!' That romantic love affair and the reasons that led the 'little lady' to begin preaching may be found in the Hartley lecture and also the History by Rev. H. B. Kendall. A reference to old circuit books shows that Pickering became a branch of Malton in 1835. The first minute of the first quarterly meeting of the branch in that year reads thus: 'That Sister Hirst be raised on the plan to an accredited local preacher,' and the minutes are signed by 'John Hirst, President.' The little cottage, whose doorway is enshrined by a prettily creeper, is still pointed out on Potter Hill. It may be of some interest that the children of the present manse are great-grandchildren of that first cottage home, and therefore Primitive Methodists of the fifth generation.

The circuit has had some notable preachers, both ministerial and lay. The Rev. John Jobling seems to live most vividly in the memory of the circuit. He did a great deal for the consolidation of the societies by the provision of good buildings. It is told that one night a big dog followed him for several miles on his journey home. When passing two desperate characters the dog came to his side, a fact to which he attributed his safety. Standing by Marton chapel one night, Mr. Jobling asked R. Coultas if any good would be done in that service. Coultas replied, 'Yes, do see you young woman coming over 't' bridge?' To-night she will be converted, and another convicted.' The prophecy came true.

How to Get a Wife.

For strange deeds Richard Coultas and Joseph Hesp stand out in the history of these parts. The former was always called 'Ranter Coultas,' and he is still universally so described. He prayed that Pickering races might be stopped, and stopped they were by a snow-storm that spoiled the track. During an all-night prayer meeting Mr. Haseltine, in whose house the gathering took place, fell back unconscious. 'Fetch a doctor,' cried some. 'No, no!' said Coultas. 'He's alright. He'll come round, and his first word will be "Glory!"' And so it transpired.

While Coultas lived on the Wolds he prayed the Lord to give him a wife. He has said that in answer he was told to go to Pickering and walk about the streets until he saw a young woman with ringlets cleaning a window. Obedient to the vision, he entered the town for the first time. Walking up the market place he saw the young lady just as she had been described. How he won the lady is not known, but he did win and marry her. 'Joe Hesp' was another religious enthusiast. He would go off to the villages on Sunday mornings and preach and pray in the streets. In town, he frequently prayed on people's doorsteps, and sometimes his prayers contained not only earnest petition, but also wholesome instruction and not a little information on the domestic life of the indwellers. Much that he did could not be commended, but he was a good man and full of the Holy Spirit.

A Faithful Steward.

The fortunes of the church do not seem to have been bright in the early forties, but a change came with the revival in 1847. About a hundred people were converted. Some of these have been the strong men of the circuit. Few now are left. One of them is Mr. John Frank, J.P. He was one of the young lads who were converted in that revival. Soon he was preaching and might frequently be seen riding to his appointments on a donkey. He has been circuit steward for half a century. Before he took office the circuit had been depressed for several years, and six preachers went away without their full salaries. One of his first efforts was to raise the money and pay all up. Pickering Primitive Methodism has largely taken colour and form from Mr. Frank's influence. He has seen all the circuit chapels built. He is in a very real sense the father of Liberalism in the district. Under his strong personality men have learned to think and take their stand on the side of progress. Repeatedly he has been asked to stand as a candidate for Parliament. Mr. W. T. Lumley, of Kirbymoorside, was another strong character who helped to build the circuit.

At Kirbymoorside a bright old lady lives who has seen the whole history of Primitive Methodism in that town. Mrs. Clark worshipped with the first society in Tisbury Garth, and is an ornament to the cause to-day. In conversation, you may refer to the church as the Primitive Methodist, but she will soon bring in the word 'Ranter.' 'Ah is a Ranter still!' she recently exclaimed, dropping into the vernacular, which is for the people the language of affection and poetry.

A minute of the quarterly meeting for June, 1841, records that 'Bro. J. Coates, of Brawby, came on as an accredited local preacher.' That was a long time ago, but Bro. Coates is still with us, and a valuable official of Marton church.

One of the glories of the circuit is that it gave to the denomination William Harland. He sprang from Newton, and his name is warmly cherished. Mrs. J. S. Jacklin, wife of an able local preacher, is a member of the Harland family.

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Robert Key, the Apostle of East Anglia.

By Rev. W. A. Hammond.

DID you know Robert Key? Aye, aye, a fine portly burly man, with massive head, and raven locks and dignified bearing, the very type of an English gentleman whom no one would ever think of taking any advantage of, a born leader of men. Such was the man who by the Grace of God was transformed from a rough and Godless coal-heaver to be the mighty apostle of East Anglia, who for fifty years devoted his magnificent strength and energy to the salvation of men.

The County of Norfolk has produced its heroes in every sphere. Kett, the Wymondham tanner, who fought against the enclosure of the Commons in his day; Nelson and Clondesley Shovel, who mightily upheld the naval supremacy of England in its time of stress and storm; Porson, the celebrated scholar; and Coke, the renowned lawyer; Walpole, the great Statesman; Samuel Clarke, the theologian; Brown, the harbinger of Nonconformity; and Martineau, the clear thinker of the last century. But in the annals of Christian workers, no name stands out with greater prominence than the name of Robert Key, and no man did more for his age and generation than he. Other names are closely associated with P.M. Home Mission work in East Anglia—John Smith (1), Samuel Atterby, George Tetley, Richard Howchin, Thomas Swindell, father of the present Mayor of Great Yarmouth, and others, but head and shoulders above them all for abiding influence on the life of the people is Robert Key.

In early life he was a 'wild, reckless, daring, thoughtless, turbulent youth, a pugilist who bore

The Marks of many an Early Encounter

to the end of his days. At the age of twenty he was arrested by the singing of a band of missionaries in the streets of Yarmouth, and on Easter Sunday, 1823, yielded himself to Christ and joined the 'Primitives.' He tells the story himself. 'I will tell you a little tale, said he, 'the tale of a bad, sinful boy who caused his father much sorrow, and who came



ST. JOHNS HEAD ROW, YARMOUTH.
OLD SCHOOL ROOM ON THE RIGHT.

in for many a beating. One day he had done badly when his poor old father, taking him by one hand, a stick in the other, broke down utterly and wept. 'Whatever shall I do with you,' said the old man. 'Father,' said the boy, 'beast me all you like, but don't cry, I can't stand that.' That boy eventually became reformed and has since opened seventy chapels, and he stands before you.

Seventy Chapels.

What a record of work it stands for. Not that he built all of them, but a very large proportion he did on ground which he himself had missioned. Plain, square, barn-like buildings, of no architectural beauty, but wonderfully serviceable as workshops for transforming men, and building up the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Within five years of his conversion he was called into the ministry of our Church. They were not days of College training, but rough and ready. Robert Key responded to the call. Congregations in those days were not very fastidious, but the Norfolk circuit to which he was sent could not tolerate the rough, boisterous, untrained efforts of this burly man, and declined to continue his ministry. Rather than retire he chose to undertake a new mission on his own responsibility, except that according to the 'liberal' custom of those days £10 was allowed for such an enterprise. Sometimes men make the occasion and sometimes the occasion makes the man. The latter was the case with Robert Key. The occasion made the man. Mid-Norfolk in those days was like other parts of rural England. Rough, ignorant, exclusive, brutal. The schoolmaster was not abroad; parochialism was strong. Every non-resident was a foreigner, and on that account exposed to violence and insult. The Sabbath was disregarded and religion was almost unknown. Hockey and fighting were the Sunday sports. 'You know, sir, we used to fight in them days,' said an old local preacher. 'I used to get my 'hoses' behind a hedge and practice on them ready for Sunday. I could use my fists pretty well, and when our village chaps used to fight with them other fellows it was lively times.' But that old fighter got converted. 'One night I was digging in my garden and I heard some singing half a mile away. I wondered what was up. I could hear them sing,

'Come and taste along with me,
Glory, Glory, Glory,
Consolation flowing free,
Glory, Glory, Glory.

'I listened, then they sang,

'The Gospel news is sounding, to nations far and near,
Come listen to the echo, now while 'tis sounding here.

'I threw down my spade and went to see what was up. Robert Key was preaching, and that night I gave my heart to Jesus.'

'Do you know, sir,' said another, 'I laid in Norwich Castle three months for breaking them are threatening machines when they came into these parts, and I came out worse than I went in. But Robert Key came to our village and I went to hear him along that ere road. And as I listened I was afeared. I thought I was such a sinner, but God saved me, and now I've been trying to serve him these fifty year.' No 'snowy banded dillatante

Delicately Handed Priest

would have availed amongst this class of men. But Robert Key, with stalwart frame and massive intellect and stentorian voice, and inflexible will and dauntless courage, was just the man for the times.

'They knocked me down and kicked me up again, but being made of rather tough materials I would not be driven out by force nor frightened out of the land by brutality,' said this hero as he was roughly handled and badly bruised at Walton.

When at Whinburgh a band of heroic women formed a ring round him whilst he preached and held the fort against all their opponents. True amazons for Christ. And within that fort he stood and fired such red-hot shot that it struck men down on every hand. 'You black-mouthed swearer,' said he to a noisy disturber, 'your master will pay you rare wages before long, and the man unbided before the strong rebuke, but within a very little while he died a wretched death. Old Smith, the tailor, thought he would put a stop to his preaching one day. 'He was a knowing sort of man in our village, and thought he could upset Key, but my word he got upset.' Whilst Key was preaching the knowing tailor called out, 'That's a lie, Key,' but the preacher went on, and again the rough sentence rang cut, and the preacher took no notice. But again the rude interruption came.

When like a Bull at Bay.

Key turned upon his interruptor and said, 'Five minutes in Hell will take all the conceit out of you my man.' It was not merely the words, but the look, the mastery of a soul on fire. The man trembled like a leaf, was afraid to go home, and there and then yielded himself to God. 'He got converted and used to go out preaching, and a mighty clever chap he made too.'

'Have you got any money about you,' asked a couple of tramps on a lonely road one night as he trudged his way home from an appointment with the village quaterage in his pocket. 'Yes, and I'm going to stick to it.' They had found their match and gladly made their escape.

In the Minute book of Key's home circuit is the strange regulation: 'That the preachers shall not wear caps to their great coats, they shall not put blacking on their shoes, and they shall not drink out of glasses at dinner, but use earthenware mugs for that purpose.' No dillatanteism there. But it wasn't a question of how the dinner should be served, but where and how it could be obtained. 'For God's sake will you be kind enough to take in a poor weary worn-out servant of His for the night,' said he when weary and footsore, to a farmer whose house he had reached but could go no further. And the farmer, whose wife had heard him preach, said 'Come in and make this your home.' On another occasion he and his companions stumbled on a parcel as they trudged their way home, and found to their joy that it contained loaves of bread. Those loaves were soon devoured. 'A kindly providence placed them there.'

This rough illiterate coal-heaver became by Divine Grace a polished shaft in the quiver of God. He put himself to school after he became a superintendent minister and paid for tuition out of his scanty salary. J. H. Tillet, M.P., said of him, 'If the rank and position of man upon earth were regulated by the Divine rule he would have stood much higher than many who carry a noble title. He was a manly Christian and a most eloquent defender of the Faith.'

When he travelled at Ipswich he delivered a course of Lectures on 'Christianity and Infidelity Contrasted.' Many of the secularists of the town attended, but the Ipswich Infidels admitted that he was their Master. In the height of some great argument he would fall back upon his own experience.

'You say that Honey Isn't Sweet.'

We have had our hands in the honey pot many a time and we know it is sweet, sweeter than honey or the honey comb. 'We won't give up our hope, bright and clear, for your black despair. I say, old fellow, if my master didn't find me a better coat than your master finds you I would give him the slip. Ah!'

The 'Wesleyan Times' said of his speech at the Metropolitan Missionary Meeting: 'It embodied some of the most sublime representations of the glory of the missionary cause, expressed in language so eloquent, with illustrations so beautiful that a finer piece of fervent oratory' was not remembered by them.

His tombstone records that for 48 years he was an earnest and faithful Primitive Methodist Minister, successful in winning many souls to Christ, and in planting numerous churches in the towns and villages of East Anglia.

Servant of God, well done!

WHITECHAPEL MISSION.

BRANCHES—

1. *Working Lads' Institute and Home.* 2. *Brunswick Hall.* 3. *Home of Rest, Southend.*

FOR the past Thirteen Years the work of the Whitechapel Mission has been carried on with cheering and increasing success. The district has a world-wide notoriety for its crime, sweating, poverty, and destitution. No more needy and poverty-stricken neighbourhood can be found in the whole of London. Thousands of sweated workers and their dependents are in a state of semi-starvation. By means of the various agencies of the Mission, many souls have been saved, and fallen ones raised to virtue and respectability. Some of these are described as Whitechapel Miracles. The Whitechapel Mission is the only one in Primitive Methodism that has been established and sustained without cost to any Connexional Fund. In addition to the extensive Evangelistic Work carried on, the poor and destitute are daily helped and befriended. No slum, dark and squalid; no homeless one, sad and forlorn; no lost and fallen ones are despaired of or shunned.

The Orphan Lads' Home has rescued and sheltered 1,300 destitute lads.

The Night Shelter has provided lodgings and food for 5,000 homeless men.

Weekly Supper has been given to more than 20,000 needy men.

The Sea-side Home of Rest has supplied free accommodation to many worthy convalescents.

The poor Mothers' Guild, The Maternity Aid Society, The Nurses and Mission Sisters have aided thousands of poor women.

The Medical Mission has assisted upwards of 83,000 needy cases.

Free breakfasts have been given five mornings per week to many thousands of hungry children.

Upwards of 3,000 poor and destitute persons were helped at Christmas.

All the work of this Mission is done in the name and for the sake of Him who said:
"I was an hungered and Ye fed me."

To sustain this extensive work we are dependent upon the freewill offerings of those who sympathise with such rescue work.

We are, at the present time, in great and urgent Financial need. We still require £2,000 to clear off the debt on Brunswick Hall, and our fund for Social Work is in debt £700. This condition of our finances occasions much anxiety. Yet we would remember that the work is God's, and therefore we will continue to hope in Him and toil on.

Are there not many readers of the "Primitive Methodist Leader" who could spare a little to help us at this pressing period?

The bitter cold weather we have had of late has occasioned untold sufferings, and increased the privations of thousands of the East End poor. The doleful refrain, each day, as our Workers visit the slums is, **"No food, No fire."** Who will help to give some cheer and comfort to these sufferers this coming Christmastime? Clothing, old or new, Xmas Cards and Picture Books, Toys, Sweets (suitable for children), Provisions, Tea, anything eatable or wearable, will be most welcome. Donations, small or large, will be gratefully acknowledged by the Superintendent—

REV. THOMAS JACKSON,

279 Whitechapel Road, LONDON, E.

A STORY OF A DOWN-TOWN CHURCH.

By Rev. T. CAMPEY.

THERE are few Primitive Methodist churches more widely known than 'Old Bethel,' Sheffield. Its history possesses all the fascination and charm of romance. Tragedy, comedy,



THE FIRST 'BETHEL' CHAPEL, SHEFFIELD.

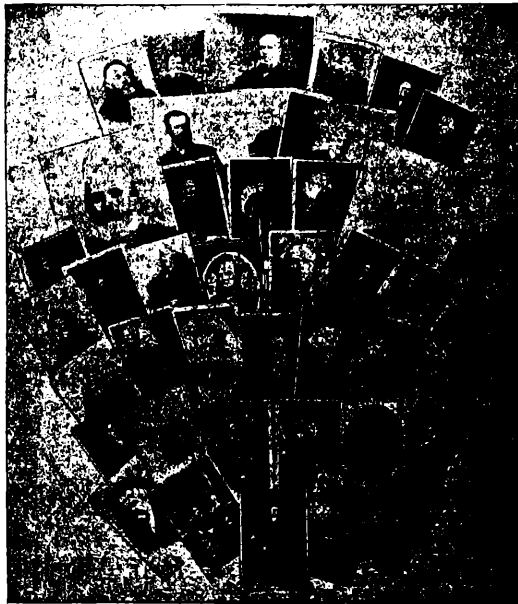
and pathos alternate in its experiences. For heroic enterprise, large and spontaneous generosity out of very scanty means, exhaustive labor, patience under crushing burdens, courageous struggles with appalling difficulties, dogged persistence in the face of stern opposition, unflinching loyalty to an unpopular cause, and glorious success, it has few equals, and no superiors. Its early members were all poor—most of them very poor, but this never deterred them from attempting great things for God. They believed that 'with God all things are possible;' and with their strong faith, fervent devotion, joyous experiences, and enthusiastic enterprises, to them also nothing seemed impossible. In the origin of this church a divine leading and a period of preparation are manifest. It began with one member. Early in the last century a youth, 17 years of age, named John Coulson, was converted at Chesterfield under the ministry of the Rev. W. Bremwell, who subsequently removed to Sheffield, where, having married, he entertained in his home that remarkable man, Lorenzo Dow, on one of his visits to England. Rumours reached him of a wonderful religious movement in Staffordshire and Nottingham, which greatly interested him, and having to visit Hull in connection with his business, he called on his way thither at a public house in Workop for refreshment, where he met with a chimney sweeper who, at the request of the landlady to sing 'that hymn with a lot of hallelujahs at the end of it,' sang 'Come, oh come, thou vilest sinner, etc. Robert, the sweep, was a Primitive Methodist, and, on his advice, Mr. Coulson, on his arrival in Hull, sought an interview with Rev. W. Clowes, which resulted in accepting an invitation to visit the next quarterly meeting at Nottingham, where he decided to unite with the body so manifestly owned of God.

Mr. Coulson was, therefore, the first Primitive Methodist in Sheffield, and we may say here that he subsequently entered the ministry and for thirty years laboured with great success. On his return to Sheffield from Nottingham he entered zealously into Christian work in association with Charles Monney, in whose house the first indoor services were held, and a small society was formed. Amalgamation took place between this and another small mission in the town, and a room was secured. These facts, for which the present writer was indebted to Mr. Robert Moss and Mr. C. H. Lee, who have had a long association with Bethel, explain the situation, which has puzzled many chroniclers, viz., that the first official missionary found a society, with a room in which to worship, and where he administered the Lord's Supper and conducted a lovefeast.

In 1819 the Rev. J. Gilbert was sent as a missionary to Sheffield by the Nottingham circuit, at the urgent request of

Mr. Coulson, and commenced his work in Young Street. From this centre Mr. Gilbert's labours extended over an area now covered by 30 oironits, and notwithstanding fierce persecution—six times he was imprisoned for preaching—the cause prospered, and the original church became the venerated mother of a numerous family of churches planted all over the district. The rapid growth of the society necessitated increased accommodation and a larger room was secured, where a varied and vigorous work was carried on. Eventually a still more favourable opening presented itself. A small chapel in Coalpit Lane, now called Cambridge Street, occupied by a mixed congregation of Baptists and Congregationalists, was for disposal, and which, with a sublime faith, which some critics would have called an insane indiscretion, they determined to purchase, although they had no resources, and the entire amount, £361, had to be borrowed. The property was secured in 1823, and the result justified the daring venture. In the original Trust Deed of this chapel there occurred this singular clause, 'That under no circumstances whatever shall any preacher be allowed to occupy the pulpit who wears trousers.' Presumably because the fashion of the times required breeches and gaiters. There was also a remarkable document prepared, which still exists, containing a clearly expressed summary of the doctrines held by the Primitive Methodist Society in Sheffield, which singularly anticipated the doctrinal statement subsequently embodied in the Constitution of the Church as set forth in the Deed Poll and 'Minutes.'

About this time Sheffield experienced a terrible visitation of the cholera, and the Rev. C. Lace, the blind preacher, laboured incessantly amongst the sick and dying. There was a great penic, and a great religious awakening. The chapel was crowded, and the society so greatly increased that those fearless men entered into another daring enterprise. The adjoining cottage property was purchased for £760, the whole of which was borrowed, as in the previous instance, and on that site the existing chapel was shortly afterwards erected, at a

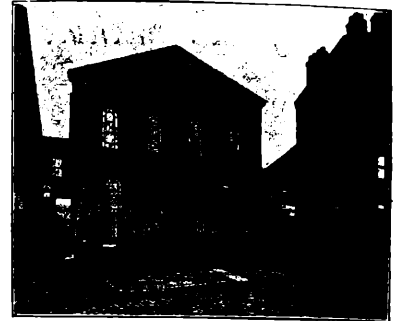


A GROUP OF OLD OFFICIALS, SHEFFIELD FIRST.

cost of £2,500, which for a few working men, with no available funds, was a formidable undertaking. But they entered into it heroically. The trustees pulled down the old property and dug the excavations for the new, while the women dressed the old bricks for use in the new structure, and in their domestic arrangements practised various economies and privations, that

he had done. The company broke up, and he went home to prey and give himself to God. The son of this man opened 'Old Bethel.'

Dark days now came upon the church. The financial strain became oppressive. The financial panic in America wrought depression, disaster, and poverty in England, in which Sheffield largely shared. Trade was bad, and work scarce. The debt was heavy. Claims for interest could not be met. Mortgagees lost confidence and began to threaten the trustees, who were almost in despair. Anxious days and sleepless nights made life a torture to the little band. Every possible means of raising money was adopted. One of the ministers was



BETHEL CHAPEL AS AT PRESENT.

released from his work for twelve months that he might travel the country as a merchant, with Sheffield goods, in the interests of the funds. At length a crisis came. An ultimatum was issued. After earnest prayer two trustees walked to Pontefract to interview the solicitor, who was acting in the case against them, and succeeded in negotiating terms which gave some immediate relief, and the property was ultimately saved. What a noble-hearted band thus to cling, unflinchingly, to their beloved church in days of stress and storm, when wreck and disaster seemed inevitable.

But the cloud lifted. With the appointment of the Rev. John Verity a brighter era dawned. 'There was a man sent from God, whose name was John,' became a popular reference at 'Bethel' to this appointment. Under his eccentric, but powerful ministry, the church and congregation increased until every sitting was full; the financial strain was relaxed; liabilities were reduced, and seasons of spiritual power experienced. Bethel has always been largely indebted to its succession of loyal and enthusiastic lay officials, such as Joseph Hunter, who excelled as class leader and family visitor; James Sheldon, most at home in open-air work, and happiest when at the head of a great procession; Samuel Rhodes, the friend and helper of young men, leading them into paths of mental culture and Christian usefulness; W. Batty, the choir master, whose mighty singing often lifted the congregation into ecstasy and raised a storm of enthusiasm. For 'Singing the glory down' he was said to have no equal; M. Boyes and T. Smith, remarkable for their love of the children and devotion to the Sunday school, and many others who, in their respective spheres, were as pillars of granite to the church. Such men co-operating with the long line of distinguished ministers, as Morgan, Brownson, Lea, Robinson, Di Kenyon, Parks, Cutts, and others, have given to 'Old Bethel' its unique position in the history of the church.

By a succession of efforts the property was gradually freed from debt, and a few years ago new and up-to-date school premises were provided, together with a caretaker's house, at a cost of £3,000, some part of which remains as debt.

The history of the Sunday school has been as unique as that of the church. It commenced in 1822 with one teacher and five scholars, and at the inaugural meeting a collection of five shillings was taken for the purchase of the teaching outfit. The little barque sailed on turbulent waters for many years, and its continued existence can only be accounted for by the courage and patience of the godly men in charge of it. From place to place they were compelled to remove. The incompetence and neglect of some of their workers hindered



'BROCCO,' SHEFFIELD, WHERE THE SCHOOL FURNITURE WAS SOLD BY AUCTION.



YOUNG STREET, SHEFFIELD, WHERE JEREMIAH GILBERT PREACHED HIS FIRST SERMON.

them. On one occasion as sub-tenants they had paid the rent of the room, but the tenant under whom they occupied it failed to pay the landlord, and the school property was seized. The superintendent, going accidentally to an advertised sale, discovered that it was their goods which were being offered. He protested and explained, with the result that the people refused to buy, and he secured the articles at a nominal price. A sad disaster befel them in connection with the usual Whitsuntide treat. It had been the custom to give the children ale and buns for breakfast on these occasions. A barrel had been secured and placed in the vestry, and left in charge of one of the teachers, who should have had all in readiness on their return from the general gathering of the schools in the town, but he was found in a very damp and limp condition by the side of the barrel, and needing assistance rather than rendering it. Needless to say that kind of refreshment was discontinued and coffee substituted in the future. In 1852 commodious schools were erected adjoining the chapel, under the superintendency of the Rev. W. Lee, father of Mr. O. H. Lee, who for many years has been a staunch and generous worker in the Bethel church, and which served the church 42 years. This enterprise formed a marked contrast to the two preceding ones, as the entire cost of erection was raised and a balance of £40 handed over to the general funds of the church.

During recent years the gradual transformation of the locality from a residential to an industrial centre, and the consequent migration of the people to the suburbs, has made the work at 'Bethel' increasingly difficult. Still, a band of faithful men and women have clung to the mother church, and, under circumstances of exceptional difficulty, have done excellent work, and displayed a remarkable self-denying liberality.

About six years ago the situation became critical, and it was recognised that a new departure in methods and management was imperative. After anxious consideration it was resolved to make the Bethel church the head of a Central Mission, under the joint management of the First circuit authorities

and a representative committee from the other circuits, with the Rev. B. Barron as superintendent. Through the generosity of the late Mr. Hy. Adams, the Rev. H. Taylor was secured as co-missioner, with Mr. W. Fawcett as lay agent, by the whole of whom much good work, social and evangelistic, was done, and which was continued under the ministry of Rev. T. Whitehead. It became increasingly evident, however,

JOSEPH HUNTER'S DOMESTIC CHURN.

that a still bolder policy was necessary, and negotiations with the General Missionary Committee resulted in an arrangement for the Bethel church to be practically detached from the rest of the circuit, which should be worked as a Branch, and Bethel to be run on mission lines under a strong inter-circuit committee.

A successful effort was made to secure the Rev. H. Coulbeck as special missionary at the last Conference, and the arrangement appears to have had the divine approval, for with his advent the dawn of a new day has broken upon 'Old Bethel.' A spirit of joyous optimism has succeeded the gloom of depression and almost of despair. The new methods of operation have proved a great success. The open-air services are popular, and Mr. Coulbeck, after only a few months' residence, is one of the best-known and best-liked men in the city. His singing, accompanied by his wonderful concertina, moves and inspires the crowds that gather round him. The variety and vigour of the meeting keep things alive, and his ringing cry, 'Now then, all together, sweep the crowd into the strong tide of song, and a volume of glorious harmony can be heard above the din of the city a quarter of a mile away. As we see rough, strong men, unwashed as they come from their work, remove their pipes from their mouths, and lustily sing, 'He's everything! Yes, everything to me!' we don't know whether to laugh or cry, and so we do both. In Mr. Fawcett, the lay agent, although 75 years of age, the missioner has an indefatigable co-worker, and in her sphere, too, Sister Annie makes her womanly influence felt, while a strong band of voluntary helpers is always to the front. The after meetings are times to be remembered, and numbers of men and women have been attracted to them who have not been inside a church for years. During the past few months nearly 200 professed conversions have taken place, including some of the most apparently hopeless cases, thus proving that the gospel of Christ is still able to lift the lowest and to save the worst. One pleasing feature of the movement is the number of young people, connected with the school and choir, who have come into the church, and are enthusiastic supporters of the out-door meetings. The ordinary congregations have more than doubled, with a corresponding financial improvement. The class meetings are numerously attended, and are seasons of great spiritual power. The outlook is bright with promises of yet greater things to be attempted and accomplished. As we review the history and work of this church, with its lights and shadows, and think of its influence, direct and indirect, immediate and remote, past, present, and future, we thank God and take courage, gratefully and reverently acknowledging that 'It is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes.'

The 'Primitive Methodist Leader' may be ordered through any Newsagent or at Railway Bookstalls.

FROM PLOUGH TO PULPIT.

The Toils and Triumphs of Thomas Russell.

BY FENTON ALLEN.



THOMAS RUSSELL.

Five months before the holding of the historic Mow Cop Camp Meeting, and in December, 1806, Thomas Russell was born on the outskirts of the Cheshire Salt Town of Middlewich. Kinderton Old Hall, dating from Tudor times, was the homestead of his youth. This ancient baronial residence is the finest specimen of black and white domestic architecture in Cheshire. It has the reputation of being the birthplace of Miss Minshall, who became the third wife of the poet Milton. After faithfully serving his generation the mortal remains of Thomas Russell were laid to rest by the grave of the Bouraes, on January 8th, 1889, in the sequestered burial ground of the Cheshire hamlet of Englesea Brook. When he was twelve years old he attended the first Primitive Methodist prayer meeting held in Middlewich, and conducted by Thomas Jackson, the connexional pioneer of Mid-Cheshire. His religious impressions were deepened by hearing Hugh Bourne preach at Congleton on the Nature and Necessity of the New Birth. He began to preach at the early age of eighteen, his trial sermon being delivered in Congleton chapel. In those days he frequently walked thirty or even forty miles to fulfil his preaching appointments. Later, in his 'Chronicles of Religion in Cheshire,' says, 'There was a lad who was well-known

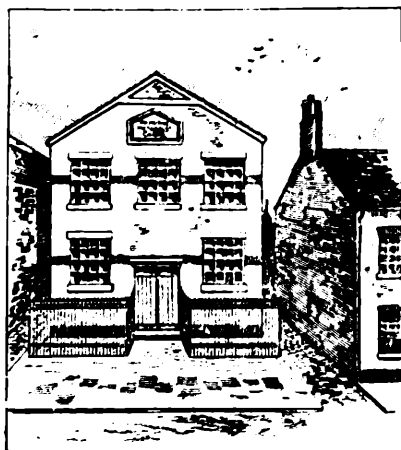
As 'Little Tommy Russell.'

He was very short in stature, and lived as a farm servant with Mr. Jepson, of the Lightwood Farm. He had just been converted, and being full of life and zeal, he was made a blessing. Little Tommy Russell afterwards became a minister in the Primitive Methodist Church, and did some faithful service in the South of England. The name of this farmer's boy is honourably mentioned in the 'History of Primitive Methodism.'

Russell longed to make the personal acquaintance of Hugh Bourne. 'Many a time,' he says, 'I have looked with considerable delight at Mow Hill from my native home in Cheshire.' During the Christmas of 1827 he was engaged by the Brothers Bourne to work on their Bemersley Farm. As a local preacher he witnessed many revivals, and missioned the hamlet of Brown Edge, where he formed the first society. After seventeen months' service at Bemersley, he commenced his ministerial labours on May 26th, 1829, by walking eighteen miles to his preaching appointment. From the Tunstall circuit he removed to the newly-formed Brinkworth circuit, where he was in labours oft, and in persecutions and privations frequent. As a pioneer, Berkshire became his parish, where amid considerable opposition he faithfully preached the gospel and witnessed its glorious soul-saving triumphs. At Hoo Benham he preached to five hundred people, and at Boxford to over a thousand. At Bucklesbury Common

A Boy named David Berry

was converted, who subsequently became prominently connected with London Primitive Methodism. At Hampstead Norris, David Kent joined the infant community and became



FIRST CHAPEL AT CONGLETON.

a successful circuit minister. After walking thirty miles Russell preached to several hundreds of people assembled in the open-air, and lighted by a candle lantern suspended from a pole. While Russell was singing on Burnthill Common, a man of wealth decided for Christ. Along with his son, Isaac Nullis, he gave hundreds of pounds for chapel building and debt reductions. At Ramsbury, Russell stood under a tree, where fifty years previously Dr. Coke, of Wesleyan fame, had been threatened with the fire engine. Russell was mobbed, stoned, and dinned with tin-can 'music.' He repeated his

visits to Ramsbury; the persecutions ceased, notorious sheep stealers and Sabbath desecrators were converted, and ultimately a society was formed. For preaching and selling hymn books at Chaddleshworth he was sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour. After undergoing a month's incarceration in Abingdon gaol, through the kindly intervention of some Free Churchmen, he was liberated. Nothing daunted, he returned to Chaddleshworth, where he was successful in establishing a society. As the result of the labours of Russell and his fellow-workers, the Shefford Branch was formed in 1830. It included fifty distinct preaching-places, five ministers, ten local preachers, and three hundred members.

The Methodist Wilderness of Hampshire.



JOHN BLUNT.

At the March quarterly meeting of 1831 Russell volunteered, on condition that he be permitted to raise his own salary, to break up the fallow ground of the Methodist wilderness of Hampshire. Leaving John Blide in charge of Shefford, he opened his commission at Hurstbourne Tarrant, where for years no religious community could ever make headway. He was received with cries of 'Church and King' and 'No Hansters here.' He was, however, encouraged by a pugilistic champion, who declared that he would spill his last drop of blood sooner than Russell should be hindered in his work. Plucky Russell was also befriended by Mr. Blunt, a Roman Catholic landowner, who asked the favour of a personal interview, which took place on the following Friday. He was heartily welcomed, and Mr. Blunt had provided dinner for Russell, which consisted of a whole round of beef! At the table the gentleman exclaimed, 'We Catholics don't eat flesh-meat on Fridays; to which Russell wittily replied: 'I hope, sir, you allow liberty of conscience!' Subsequently, Russell and his colleagues, along with Hugh Bourne, shared the gentleman's hospitality. On his first visit to Lincolnshire, the Osmonds, who were 'the largest family in the village,' united with the society that Russell formed. At one time the brothers Richard

and Michael rented and farmed the whole of the parish. Richard and Stephen Osmond, along with their sister, became local preachers. This family in many ways rendered valuable assistance to Hampshire Primitive Methodism. Russell's Hampshire converts also included the Farns of Bindley, and Thomas Cummins, Robert Langford, Henry Green, and a young man named Johnson, all of whom became ministers of the Gospel. Hampshire Mission was incorporated with Shefford, and was made an independent circuit.

Russell Potatoes!

In the spring of 1832, Russell's restless energy found its outlet in aggressive extension in the spiritually neglected White Horse Vale. He opened his campaign at Wantage, the birth-town of King Alfred. At the close of the Sabbath morning's service he was covered from head to foot with slime, filth, and rotten eggs, his clothing was torn, and his flesh bruised. After washing his clothes in the canal and putting them on wet, he proceeded to Faringdon, where brutal treatment befell him. Again he cleansed, his clothing and preached at Shrivenham, where he was drenched with filth. A third time he washed his clothes, and held another service, when his lip was cut with a stone. During that memorable Sabbath Russell walked thirty-five miles and preached four times amid brutal opposition. On several subsequent Sabbaths he visited Faringdon, where persecution was of the most violent character. A Quaker gentleman named Fox requested him, for protection, to preach in front of his residence. On one Sabbath a publican gratuitously supplied the mob with two sacks of potatoes to throw at Russell while he was preaching. A half-witted lad ventured to tell the publican 'that he would want them potatoes some day!' Some of the sympathisers picked up the potatoes, and planted them under the name of Faringdon-Russells. The singular prophecy of the lad came true. The publican was reduced to want and died in the workhouse while the sympathetic Quaker prospered, and was enabled to bequeath several thousands of pounds to his family.

For many years Thomas Russell continued his energetic ministry. He opened some score of towns and villages; he built several chapels, and saw nearly three thousand people converted, some of whom rose to eminence in the Christian church, the commercial circle, and in civil life.

Remember to mention the 'Primitive Methodist Leader' when answering any advertisement seen in these pages.

DICK HILLINGTON'S RIDE.

A Tale of the Good Old Times.

By J. Dodd Jackson.

Yes, in those days missionary meetings were missionary meetings worth looking forward to for a whole year round, worth attending though the chapel lay three miles over the moor, and the month was December, always then a time of snow and drift on our wild land—worth remembering—in fact, unforgettable as I, an old stager now, can well aver. Laying down my pen and shutting my eyes, the whole scene is before me, and voices stilled long years ago are in my ears. I can see in the pulpit the great men of the connexion, among them our own ministers, perhaps not so great as some men who came to visit us, but are good men and true. My father is there—chairman he was for a score of years until the old reaper gathered him in. I see the people in the crowded pews—George Reader, with face all a shine—Sally Wilson in that old black bonnet known at funerals and anniversaries the country round—Mr. Slack, the schoolmaster, who, being afflicted with a squint, seemed to keep one eye on the pulpit and the other on us lads and lassies near the stove—blind Willie—Harry of 'The Longstream'—more, many more, all home now for many a day. I hear again the singing and speeches—descriptions of heathen customs and cruelty chilling our blood, inflaming our ardour, stories of missionary sacrifice and triumph—prophecies of the conquest of the world for King Jesus rousing the soul to such enthusiasm as it is good to feel. All this I hear and see though three score years have— one, and clearly, too, though the sights and sounds around me now come but dimly and faintly to my aged eyes and ears. Yes, those meetings were meetings, but the meetings were not all. After the doxology and the benediction, when after the long drive home we were back in the old home, among the hills, came the supper, and I can taste the supper as I can hear the singing and speaking. And why not? That, too, was an item of the Missionary Round, and ours was always the preachers' home, and the grace of hospitality was poured out in Methodist land when it is not to-day. I was young then—a growing lad, with an appetite sharpened by mountain air, and besides, only at Christmas and on Missionary night were we youngsters at Maybury Manor allowed to sit up until our elders retired. 'Early to bed makes young cheeks red' was my father's wise proverb, forgotten more frequently than not in these degenerate days when young cheeks are often pale for want of beauty sleep, and young eyes have dark circles below them where the roses should just begin. Then the supper was a supper. On the board Yorkshire ham of our own killing, beef that made your mouth water, pies and pasties and jellies and cakes such as only Yorkshire can show. Round the board—father at the head, on his right the deputation, a double-barrelled one, a young man and an old, on his left our superintendent, next to him his colleague, then, anywhere, the rest of us, Aunt Martha and Uncle John from the Burn Fort, William Brown and Mary Brown, George Reader, named before, Mr. Slack, one eye on the ham and another on the pasties, here and there among the elders the children—five of us, ready, aye, ready—mother at the bottom with the silver coffee-pot and tea-pot before her, her white lace cap covering her bonnie brown hair, her sweet blue eyes all aglow with kindness, her rosy country face flushed with pleasure as the great men of the evening praised her cooking, and showed their praise to be sincere. I remember it all—remember how we ate, and drank, and talked, and laughed, and how fervently before commencing we sang, 'He present at our table, Lord,' and again, after a long and busy interval, 'We thank thee, Lord, for this our food.' Yes, I, all comes back, and blots out for a while the present, and to think that of all the happy company left round the table I, aged and feeble, alone am left behind.

But even the supper was not the greatest of those far-off delights. Lad as I was I liked the stories better, and the stories came after the supper, and generally the senior member of the deputation told them. I cannot remember an occasion in which my grand old Methodist father did not turn the conversation to the romantic side of the history of the church he loved the best. The old memories would be awakened. I have heard tales to make you laugh and cry and come to make you tremble and want to keep the candle burning when at last you lay in your bed and the home again was still. This was as we sat round the fire in the big windowed parlour, the logs blazing up the chimney, the winter wind roaring in the dark fire without. I wish I could gather them up—those old stories—the sagas, the runes, the acts of the mighty days.

One story I will tell coming to mind among the memories of one wild meeting night long, long ago in that noble past. The deputation that year was Jacob Featherstone, even then a venerable man and known from end to end of the connexion for a great soul and true lover of the church. Many a thing that has happened but recently I forget, as is the way of old men, but long-bye things, as is again the way of old men, I remember, and I can even hope to put down the history almost in the words of the speaker. I can see him now as he sits in the big chair nearest the fire—smoking and talking—the light of the flames coming and going over his long white beard and mellow countenance and making him look, as little sister May said, like old Father Christmas. Father he was of many a child in God, and if Christmas means good cheer, Father Christmas indeed!

'Did I ever tell you the story of Dick Allington, John?' he said, turning to my father—for they were old friends, and many of his histories, but not this one, my parent had heard before—'did I ever tell you the story of Dick Allington, of his wild life, and how he was won to God and became a burning and a shining light? No! Then you shall have it now. Hark how the wind roars—Mistress, another log. Thank God for a good fire!

'Well—Dick Allington—who was he? Son of old Squire Allington, of Overstone Hall, away yonder in the Wolds. Squire was a churchman of the old sort—all for cordliness and integrity—hard in the grain, perhaps, but upright as a pine tree, and sturdy as an oak. Squire's lady had heard the preaching of Wesley and got religion—you see I am taking you a long way back—a church-woman to the end, but a saint in heart, pious, with a deep tender piety. She was a woman of great faith, too, and she needed it, or else Dick had broken her heart, as he did his father's. About the lad's young days I do not know a great deal. It was said that as a boy he showed the possession of a kind heart and a brave spirit, and that the old squire doted on him, and, of course, his mother, too, for he was the only child. I have heard that he went away to school and that he gave promise there of making a good man, and more and more the hearts of his parents were given to him. After school, the university and at Oxford, somehow things went wrong—bad company; and dice, and wine, and debt; and from the University Master Richard was sent home disgraced.

'To think that we should have but one son,' cried the mother 'and he's a rake!'

'One son or twenty,' exclaimed the old man, 'I'll not forgive him for five years. That time he shall have, and it is a long chance—that time to retrieve his good name, and if at the end of it he has not come to his senses, son of mine no more shall he be.' That was the sentence, and a stormy scene there was at the passing of it. The lad insolent and defiant, the mother weeping and entreating him to think of her, his father, his own future, his God—eternity; the father calm and quiet and resolved, as it was his nature to be.

Such was the home-coming of the prodigal, and so the years of his last opportunity began. At this time he was but eighteen years of age, and one would have thought that sin could hardly have made him his hopeless slave so early in life. So it seemed, however, and those who knew the history of his family said it was not surprising, for he came of a wild and headstrong stock. Howbeit he went from bad to worse. In all the country side there was not another so wild as he—not one who had less thought of the common decencies of life and of filial duty. Money he had, for his father said that he would stick to his word and give him a gentleman's chance to be a gentleman, but the more money, the more sin. Good friends were his as well as bad and many a one tried to win him to wiser ways. True his father said in that stern unbending way of his that he had spoken once and would speak no more, but his mother left no means untried and prayed continually. She it was who would wait up for his coming far into the long dark night, and she it was who received him at his worst with affection and long suffering. Perhaps things might have been different had she been longer spared, but 'er the third year was up she died one wintry day, and died weeping and praying for the son who even at that moment was careless and unrepentant. It seemed as if nothing could touch him. If ever the evil one had entered in possession he had done so of this lad's heart. The remaining two years passed, and so the very day the Squire, with his own hand, opened the door and pointing down the long drive bade his only son go out forever. Calmly he did it, without a tear on his cheek or a tremor in his voice but his heart was broken and the next morning they found him lifeless in his bed. He had kept his word, and of all the inheritance and broad acres he had received from his ancestors not a rood was left to the son who had dishonoured his name.

After this, as may be thought, Richard Allington tasted of the bitterness of his wickedness. Of where he went for some years and what he did I know nothing, excepting that he pursued so far as he could the kind of life he cared for most. Others were at the Hall, and he had almost been forgotten, when one day he made his appearance in the village. He had married, and strangely enough married a good, true, sweet woman, and he had brought her and her one child to the scenes of his youth. Possibly there was at that time some thought of improvement—or perhaps he realized that he must make a livelihood for those dependent upon him. He settled in the village and took to dealing in horses—a bad trade for such a man, but perhaps the only thing he could do—for he knew a horse if ever man in England did. There was policy in coming back to the old familiar scenes. He had at least his name and the memory of his parents to recommend him to patronage among the gentry and farmers around, and it did appear for a little while at first as if some success were, at last, to be his.

But only for a little while were the signs of a brighter order—then the old life began again, with the inevitable result, which would have mattered little had he alone been concerned; but other lives were dependent upon him now. To them as well as to him came poverty. The day came when his patient wife must tell him that there was no longer bread to eat.

'Then,' said he, 'I'll take to the road. Others have done it, and after all it is only taking from the rich to help the poor. This is Ripington fair-day, and there will be plenty home-going with money to take, so here goes.'

'It may mean the gallows,' cried his wife, holding him by the skirts of his coat. 'Oh! I'll work, or beg or borrow, anything but that!'

'It may mean the gallows! Let it do so,' he said, 'Why should others fatten and flourish and we starve among the fields that should have been our own. Let it mean what it will, I'll not be the first gentleman to take to the turnpike for a short life and a merry one.' And, before she could

further plead, Richard Allington had torn himself from his wife and was gone.

Now I've always thought that the man must have been in drink that night, or else he was touched with the madness that often comes of sin, or else he had never done as he did. I've thought, too, that the devil must have gone out of his way to help him, as he sure he does at times by those he wishes to entangle yet the more. Else how came it to pass that as Allington strode out of the village he should find 'Saucy Jane' tethered at the inn door, while Squire Darcy, to whom Dick himself had sold the mare, was carousing inside? To be convicted of horse stealing in those days was death, but Dick's power to reckon must have been lost in recklessness and despair. Not a soul was in sight, not a foot moved in the long dead street. It was a November night, dark and rainy, with never a star in the sky. Quickly he unlashed the bridle, softly he gained the saddle, almost noiselessly he guided the beast, which knew him, out along the silent highway. I know the road, every inch of it, a black and lonely road it is, and if I only had you there could lead you, step by step, the whole way of that night's history. Under an oak tree, barely a mile from the village, he halted his horse and waited, listening to catch the sound of passing footfall. Suddenly out of the gloom came the noise of hoofs and wheels; a moment and down the hill came slowly a coach drawn by a single horse. An instant and Richard had called upon the driver to stop, which he, fearing worse, was fain to do, for this sort of thing was common in that wild country then. An instant more and our highwayman, having opened the door, was gazing down from his saddle into the dimly-lighted vehicle. One passenger only he saw—a little old grey man, dressed as a clergyman of the Church of England, who actually looked calmly into his face.

'I want your money!' exclaimed Dick, his heart in a strange way beginning all at once to fail him under that steadfast gaze.

Still, the old man looked coolly at him, and, strange to say, almost smiled. Then he spoke: 'Friend, he said, then hast come to a poor bank, for silver and gold have I none, saving a little for the needs of the way. Tell me hast thou done this kind of thing before?'

'No,' said Dick, still less liking his business, 'No, on my soul I never! and I had not come this night but wife and child are starving for want of bread. Come, hand over at least enough to buy them food.' Do as he would, he could not bluster under the gaze of that little old man's eyes. 'It looked through him, that gaze, he felt it thrill along his very marrow; he shivered, his voice shook, his teeth chattered, speech died upon his lips. Whatever he was, Richard Hillington was no coward. Six feet tall he was, and built to correspond; but as this old man sat quietly looking, looking at him, he felt, as he afterwards said, as weak as water and as cold as death. Then came upon him a new experience, the experience of utter panic. Like a flood his rising fears burnt their bonds, and seemed to drown his every faculty. With a wild cry of terror, which he could not restrain, of which, indeed, he was hardly conscious, he struck his horse upon the flank, and sprung off at a mad gallop into the darkness down the road.

How long Dick Hillington galloped on that awful night, or how far, he never really knew. It was on, and on, and on—gallop, gallop, gallop away, away, away. Down the hard, rough road he flew, the fire flying from his horse's heels—down dark muddy lanes, his face scratched by the thorn branches of the hedges on either side, over ploughed fields, taking fence and ditch, he knew not how. It seemed to him that he was pursued, though no footfall of man or beast came out of the darkness—the wind seemed to laugh at him, and voices were on his ears, the voice of his father bidding him begone the door, the voice of his mother's long forgotten pleading, the cry of his wife—'It will end on the gallows, it will end on the gallows.' He heard the creak of the gibbet, as once in his wanderings he had heard it before, and still on and on he sped, until suddenly the end came. A stumble of his panting beast, and he fell and knew no more.

When he came to sensibility, he knew not how long afterwards, Dick Hillington found himself at home, and a physical woe—his head, and how many limbs, I don't know, broken and bandaged. By his side sat his wife, pallid with sorrow. Some one had found him, and, curiously enough, not far away, for in his terror he had ridden round and round rather than straight on. Squire Darcy's horse had made its way home, arriving there long before its besotted owner had discovered its loss. It might have been ridden, it might not, anyhow there was Saucy Jane in the stable, and no one could or horse thief on her account. Dick, of course, as he lay senseless on the bed, could not tell the story, and those who brought him home could only wonder and suspect the truth. It mattered little, however, for the man was to all appearance dying. Perhaps that mattered little, too. He had not so used his life that men should anxiously wish to see it prolonged. What did matter to those who brought him home and to others to whom they told the story was, that in the home of old Squire Hillington's son there was neither meat nor bread nor fire. They must see these needs supplied, and for the sake of the wife and little one, and in memory of the dead, supplied they were. For the same sake many came to inquire concerning the sufferer, and among them one whom the broken man upon the bed had no reason to wish to see.

It was on the third day from the accident and within a few hours after Hillington's return to consciousness that this visitor came—an old grey man knocking at the cottage door. Dick Hillington was still engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with death, and it seemed to the watching wife that the King of Terrors was getting the mastery, so that seeing from the window that the stranger was a clergyman she called him to enter and climb the stair. It was touch and go for Hillington at that moment, I can tell you, for as the stranger entered the room he lifted his gaze. It was the old man of the eyes—the grey calm man of the coach. The face on the pillow became white with ashy pallor, his breath came short and quick between the white lips, the sweat drops stood upon the brow.

What would have happened there is no knowing had not the stranger spoken. 'Softly, my friend,' he said, and his voice was rich and kind, 'we have met before, but of that nothing. Man, I knew your mother years ago. I come to tell you about the God who saved her! Tell me, do you not need him now?'

'Ay,' whispered Dick, trembling like a leaf, 'I do, I do! But who are you?'

'Men call me John Wesley,' was the answer, 'and but that I wanted to see Margaret Hillington's son I had been miles on my way to London, coming from which city on my outward journey I encountered you. But, man, they tell me you have not long to live; repent, and pray, while there is yet time,' and by that had the honoured Wesley preached the Gospel to Dick Hillington until Dick prayed and believed and was brought to God, nor did the preacher move from the bedside until he knew that salvation had come to that poor heart. 'And now,' he said, 'I have far to travel, my coach waits me at the inn, and I must take my way.'

'No,' faltered Dick, 'not yet. Tell me but one thing before you go. You are old and I am young, and until the other night could with a grip of this right hand have crushed the life out of you. Yet as I stood beside you in the road I shook with fear and weakness. Tell me why I could not rob you.'

'Lad,' said Wesley, drawing a little Bible from his pocket, 'I have the reason printed here upon this page. Listen—*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shall thou trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day. For forty years have I travelled on land and sea, in storms and persecutions, amid perils oft, and never once has that Word failed me, and never will. Oh! man, the mighty God of Israel was in that road upholding me, restraining you, delivering us both. Blessed by the name of the Lord!*'

'Amen,' said Dick. 'John Wesley went on his way, but ere he passed the door a ray of sunshine, which had struggled through the thick November clouds, stole in through the chamber window and fell upon him, on the page of the book still open in his hand, on his noble face, on his silver hair, crowning him with golden glory, as if the eternal diadem he was so soon to wear already graced his brow. Dick Hillington did not die, and long years were from this day given to him and to his wife, but that picture never faded as their years crept on. 'We shall see him like that in heaven,' they would say one to another, 'see him crowned and shining, and we will know him, and we will

thank him, and the angels shall bear in the paces of the music of all he did in Christ's name for us.'

From that day Richard Hillington came swiftly back to health. Only in one thing were the effects of his narrow brush with death visible upon him. To the end of his life he limped a little as he walked. Like Jacob of old, as he often remarked, he baled upon his thigh, and like Jacob of old he got his infirmity in wrestling with an angel in the darkness. To say that he was converted seemed language all too mild when one thinks of some who claim conversion now-a-days. He was transformed within and without, and, zealous as he had been for evil, became tenfold more zealous for good. To his surprise he did after all inherit a modest fortune, for his mother had possessed a little property of her own and had left it in trusty hands to be his when he, without knowledge of its existence, should show proof of a change of life. It was hardly so much as to make him wealthy, but enough to enable him to wholly devote himself to the service of God in labouring for Methodism. A mightier evangelist than Richard Hillington, or one more laborious, sacrificing and successful Methodist in that countryside has never known. To tell of his toils—the long, weary miles he walked and rode in storm and shine—his preachings on village greens and by the waysides, the persecutions he endured, the souls he won, would be to tell a story it were hard to believe. Greatly he had sinned, greatly he sought to atone, and grandly at last in a ripe old age he died—and that is the story of Dick Hillington. Tell me, John, what you think of it?

My father was silent—his face shining, his eyes moist; but my mother spoke. 'One thing I'd like to know: what became of the wife and little one?'

'The wife lived on to a green old age,' answered old Jacob Featherstone, 'the child became my mother, and I thank God that on a journey to preach in the north John Wesley was once like to have been robbed on the King's highway. I knew the would-be robber, and on my head, his hand was placed in application. And now—a chapter and a prayer and so to bed.'

Yes, missionary meetings were missionary meetings in those good days.

Whatever criticism may be levelled at 'firstly' and 'secondly,' 'thirdly' was lifted above criticism, for many souls were saved that night 'to help to fill and support the chapel,' the erection of which had been marked by many and great difficulties. If Oxtoby had not the genius for homiletics, he knew how to pray and believe and get men and women saved. What kind of report the deputation presented we do not know, but 'Johnny' was henceforth on the 'Approved List.'

When in Weardale he was at once called upon to address the expectant crowd. 'Said he, "I think we had better have a little prayer before I do wot else," and falling on his knees, he prayed until sinners began to cry for mercy. His speech was not given, but many souls were saved. What faith was his! Preaching at Cranswick in a barn, and being constantly interrupted by a very big man, when he could forbear no longer he said, "Lord, knock that great fellow down," and the "great fellow" dropped as if shot. When leaving the Driffield

I go right up, and reach out my hand, and tak' what I want.' Hearing a man pray in a very round-about fashion, Oxtoby said, 'Man, thou art a mile off God.' To a man newly-converted, who had accompanied him part of the way home one night, Oxtoby shouted, after they had parted, 'Hoi! Hoi! I had forgotten to tell thee when thou can't feel thou must believe.' Arriving late at a missionary meeting in Weardale, he was at once called upon to address the expectant crowd. 'Said he, "I think we had better have a little prayer before I do wot else," and falling on his knees, he prayed until sinners began to cry for mercy. His speech was not given, but many souls were saved. What faith was his! Preaching at Cranswick in a barn, and being constantly interrupted by a very big man, when he could forbear no longer he said, "Lord, knock that great fellow down," and the "great fellow" dropped as if shot. When leaving the Driffield

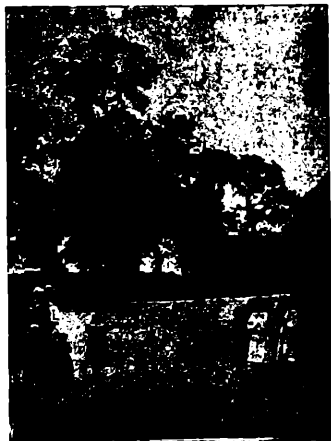


OXTOBY'S GRAVE.

Rev. John Oxtoby, alias 'Praying Johnny.'

Incidents Grave and Gay.

JOHN OXTOBY was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Woolhouse on the day of the arrival of William Clowes in Hull to commence his wonderful evangelistic campaign. No date in our Church history is more significant than January 15th, 1819. Oxtoby and the Woolhouses were Wesleyans at the time, but they were enthusiastic evangelists, and the spirit and achievements of the first Primitives had won their admiration and their hearty co-operation.



VILLAGE CHURCH AND ELM TREE UNDER WHICH OXTOBY HELD MEETINGS.

Oxtoby was born at Little Givendale, in East Yorkshire, in 1762. Adversity overtook his parents, and he went to live with an uncle, with whom, amid very lowly surroundings, John spent his early years. He was a regular church-goer, but was not converted until past forty years of age. Conscience-stricken and ill, he was absent from church one Sunday, which uncommon occurrence brought the clergyman to see him on Monday to ascertain the reason. 'Nought, only my sins,' was John's reply. 'Your sins,' said the astonished cleric. 'Your sins, why what sins have you done? You have always been a good man, a good churchman, and a good Christian.' 'Nay,' said John, 'I've been none so good as I should have been, the Lord knows.' His physician suggested that he was out of health, and low in spirits, and that nourishment, in the form of a bottle of wine, would soon put him right. 'I do not think so. I want my sins forgiven, man,' replied the sufferer. The clergyman read some prayers and asked, 'Are you any better, John?'

'Not a bit, not a bit, you mud as well have poured cold water down my back, man, as read me them prayers. I want sommat different frae that,' was John's answer. At length he found 'sommat different frae that' in a sermon on 'Saving Faith' in a Methodist chapel.

No sooner did he receive the faith-cure than he began to preach to others. In this ministry he visited all classes of people, told the story of his conversion, and prayed with such power that many were converted, and early in his spiritual

career he became known as 'Praying Johnny.' His fragile habits had enabled him to save a little money, and as his fame spread abroad he gave himself to evangelistic work in his native county and in the north of Lincolnshire. George Nicholson, a Wesleyan local preacher, a man of larger mental resources and power than Oxtoby, became his 'fellow-labourer' in the Gospel. And many are the thrilling stories recounted of these flaming souls. On one occasion, when Nicholson was to preach, he gave out his text, but it would not go; he gave out a second and a third, neither of which would go. Johnny said, 'Thou woot let it go, get thee down and let me try.' He told his experience of conversion and sanctification, and scores of people were converted. Staying together in the same house, Nicholson one day commenced singing—

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

'You don't sing Oxtoby,' said Nicholson. 'No,' said he, 'I should be telling the Lord as I sing that.'

Coming into contact with Clowes in Hull Oxtoby threw in his lot with him, and accompanied him in his excursions into the North of England, but more as a lowly assistant than as his equal. His work, as he described it, was 'picking up the birds that Clowes shot.' He was not new at the business, for when Nicholson was preaching on one occasion at El-longhoughton a man in the singers' pew fell on the floor. Oxtoby went to him and looked at him. 'Hold him up, Johnny,' said the preacher. 'Nay, Marry,' said Oxtoby, 'he's dead enough; thou always kills 'em first shot.' Encouraged by Clowes, Oxtoby began to visit places alone, and was soon placed on the plan as a local preacher. Being supported largely by his own purse he had comparative freedom in the choice of his scenes of labour, and he preferred the most difficult, and especially those in which others had failed to gain an entrance. The well-known story of his conquest of Flay is a case in point.

Oxtoby as a Preacher.

His name appears for the first time in the Conference Minutes for 1821 as a travelling preacher. He was not a full-fledged minister, however, until 1823 or 1824. In connection with his reception into the full ministry he had to preach twice at the District Meeting, once at the camp meeting, and again at a service indoors. At the former service his text was, 'Will ye also be His disciples?' He commenced by saying, 'I have been told I must be systematic, and have three heads to my sermon, so we will notice—'

First—Will ye all be His disciples?

Second—Will ye all be His disciples now?

Third—Will ye all be His disciples always?

The account of his second sermon is still more interesting. He knew that a specially-appointed deputation had come to hear him preach; but that does not seem to have troubled him greatly. The text was, 'Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen are not made of the things which do appear.' 'I understand,' said he, 'that I am to preach, and I'm told that I can't preach if I ain't systematic and divide my text into heads. I always thow't that owt with more than yan head was a monster, but it seems with our great preachers it isn't so. We shall therefore notice—'

First—That through faith, we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, etc.

Secondly—We shall notice that through faith Driffield chapel was built.

Thirdly—We shall notice that through faith souls shall be saved to-night to help to fill and support it.'

circuit he said to a woman who had a very wicked husband, 'Good day, Marry, the Lord will convert thy husband, and he will be a good man for many a day.' So it came to pass. The man was soon converted, lived a saintly life for over forty years, and died in the triumph of the Faith.

Having preached out of doors one night, and many miles from home, he announced that he would be thankful if any friend would shelter him from the night and the rain. A man ventured to take him home, but his wife declared the preacher might have some bread and milk, but on no account should he stay for the night, and she freely expressed her opinion of 'the lazy vagabonds who, too lazy to work, went up and down preaching for what they could get.' John bore it all with meekness, and having finished his supper, he said, 'I must pray a word or two before I go. Prayer over, she accompanied him to the door, and, her heart relenting, she said, 'You are an o' d' man, and it's a long way for you to walk in the dark and rain.'

You may Stay this Once.

but remember, we're not going to make a practice of it.' Oxtoby replied, 'If I do stay and the Lord will make thee such a right of it as thou hast never had in all thy life.' 'Never mind,' said she, 'come in.' At three o'clock in the morning her husband knocked at Johnny's door and begged of him to come down at once as his wife was in great distress of soul. Oxtoby had not undressed, but had been praying all the time. 'Ow, what must I do?—what must I do?' cried the woman. 'Do!' said he, 'do! why thou must repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and He will save thee.' She, like many others, had entertained an angel unawares.

Oxtoby's light was never under a bushel, but held aloft where all could see it. His song was not only in his heart but upon his lips. A person in a gig overtook him one night and offered him a ride, which was gladly accepted. But Johnny could not conceal his identity. 'Hallelujah! shouted he, 'A Ranter Preacher Riding to Heaven in a Gig!'

He was threatened with ejection if he would not be silent. But silence was impossible, and he had to get down and walk. The music of his soul must become vocal. There was a merry hearted woman at Boshope called 'Dancing Nanny,' a Wesleyan, who was given to much prayer, singing, and dancing, but she was merrier when among the Primitives, and when asked to account for the difference, she said, 'Because the Ranters are better fiddlers.'

Oxtoby was not a clown. His speech might be repolished, and his methods homely, but he was a personate, soulful, untiring, and successful soul-winner. In home, or chapel, or on the road he was seeking the lost sheep. To a tacksalder breaking stones on the road near Hexham he said, as he journeyed, 'Have you seen a wandering sheep come this way? One has strayed from the fold, and I am told it is somewhere in this direction.' The parable went straight home, they knelt together on the road, and the wandering sheep was restored to the fold.

On Jan. 19th, 1880, 'Praying Johnny' heard his Master say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

THE WORM OF CONSCIENCE.

A Christmas Story.

By F. C. GARDINER, Author of 'Divided Houses,' 'In the Days of the Nazarene,' 'Red House,' &c.



MR. F. C. GARDINER.

'God help the poor things who have to be out a night like this!'

Thus the Reverend Hugh Pearson expressed himself as he buttoned his heavy overcoat to his chin, and hurried through the streets of Hull to his lodgings on Christmas Eve.

The blinding sleet came down upon him ceaselessly, and clung to his thick clothing, fanned its way through the heavy soles of his boots, bit into the nerves and marrow. Ugh! God help them!

Shivering masses of starving men and women crowded the causeways, sheltered in dark doorways, slouched past the brightly-lighted shops and taverns, screamed their wares under the theatre shelters; and not men and women only, but under-fed, ill-clad children; not under shelters and on the causeways only, but in the mud and slush of the gutters, with ories that stabbled like a knife. God help them!

The Reverend Hugh Pearson hurried away from the scene. The sights robbed him of his peace of mind. He felt helpless in the presence of so much misery, and he sighed, 'The poor ye have always with you.' Yes, *the poor*; but not such distress as this.

'Wax vestas, sir.'

The minister stopped as if in a dream.

'A penny a box, please, sir.'

It was a woman's voice, and it came from the most abject creature he had seen in his hurry through the streets.

'Yes, my good woman, certainly,' he said, holding out his hand. 'It is a hard life, this.'

'Yes, sir.'

'You have no children, I hope,' he continued, kindly, and then, thinking he was thrusting himself too precipitately upon another's privacy, he hastened to add, 'Pardon me, but I thought—'

'Yes, I have.' The words leapt out. It was as if she said, 'What has that to do with you?'

'You have had trouble?'

'It wasn't Jim's fault,' she replied, almost fiercely, edging away. 'But I ain't goin' to tell you, nor the likes o' you, with yer white collars an' shiney hats. Go away—pryin', that's what you are.'

The minister perceived that he had unconsciously touched her on the raw. 'I am exceedingly sorry to offend you,' he said, gently, 'but I do not wish to pry. If I could help you—'

'Help you?' she broke in. 'The likes o' you'll never find him, an' that's the only help I want.'

He drew nearer. It was the pull of elemental tragedy. It brought him into kinship with her. His soul leapt into his eyes, and for a moment he looked over the brink that divided them, and he yearned for a sympathy that could bridge it. Though they stood so near to each other, in their soul's life they were continents apart; it seemed impossible for him to reach her. 'If you will trust me,' he said, 'I will try to find him for you.' And he thought how feeble were his words in the presence of such a tragedy as this.

'Trust you?' and the note of contempt in her voice out the minister to the heart. 'I'll trust you when I know you; let me alone and go away.' For a moment he was taken aback, and as he was about to speak, the woman, seeing a possible customer on the other side of the street, unceremoniously left him.

He resumed his journey homeward, feeling that somehow he had blundered. His introspective habit of mind made him a severe critic of his own actions. The finest impulses of his generous nature left him in the torments of a lingering regret. In his dealings with men he felt that his imperfect sympathies, or rather the imperfect expression of those sympathies, were a barrier to the effective discharge of his holy office. This self-examination to which he hourly subjected himself was the worm of conscience batten on a highly sensitive nature, and the more diligent he became in the pursuit of his son's culture, the more was he racked with the gnawing pain within.

On reaching his lodgings he ran upstairs and flung himself on his knees and asked God to forgive him, begging that He would not only guide him in the Spirit but in the very words he should utter when trying to help his fellow men; that he might not wound the least of His creatures by word or deed. And he prayed for the deserted match woman and her children, and for the return of her husband, and then for the starved waifs of the streets, the homeless sots in the gin palaces, the human wrecks he had passed in the shadows.

He was disturbed in his prayer by his landlady calling from the foot of the stairs:—'A man wishes to speak to you, sir.'

'I'll be down in a minute. Show him into my study,' he answered, and presently he joined his visitor.

'You won't know me, sir,' the man began nervously, 'but I am an unfortunate out-of-work and—'

The minister almost beamed with sympathy: here was his opportunity, he was thinking.

'Take a seat. You are out of work, you say?'

'Yes sir. I walked from York a few days ago, and I've been tryin' to get work in Hull, and now I'm stranded.'

'My poor man! Draw up to the fire. You are wet and cold.'

'Very cold, sir, and hungry.'

'Ah. I'll speak to my landlady. You are stranded, you say? What made you come to me?'

The man produced a much soiled class-ticket. 'I'm a Primitive, sir, and you being a Primitive—'

A faint shadow of suspicion passed over the minister's

face; a letter he had read in the connexional weekly came instantly to his mind. He put the ticket on the table and began ruminating among his newspapers.

'So you're a Primitive?'

'Yes sir.'

'Oh, here it is,' the minister muttered, beginning to read to himself. 'He finds out the minister's address, presents a class ticket, says he is out of work, tramped from York, age about twenty-five or twenty-six, clean-shaven, short, thick-set, gives the name James Hind, etc., etc.' Mr. Pearson looked up and examined the man critically. 'The description fits to a T,' he muttered, but to the man he said: 'You were in work at York?'

'Yes.'

'The name on the ticket is Harold Ward. Is that your name?'

'Surely, sir, you do not doubt me?'

'You will be twenty-six years old?'

'Twenty-seven.'

'You are not in the habit of doing this kind of thing?'

The man's look was piteous. For a second his eyes flashed angrily, and then, half-smothering his resentment, he answered: 'You take me for a sponger. You—you—' He could get no further. Standing up, he took his cap out of his pocket and looked the minister full in the face. 'I am sorry I troubled you, but when a man is down he grabs at anything. I was a Primitive—but what's the good of that now? The man's voice broke huskily. 'My wife and child are starvin', and you—' He could say no more, and, without waiting for the minister to reply, he rushed from the room and out of the house.

Mr. Pearson stared at the open door in amazement. 'You have misjudged him,' said Conscience decisively, quick to bear witness again. 'I feel it; I know it,' he groaned. He looked at the paper in his hand, and read the letter again. 'And yet the description tallies in almost every particular; but he loves his wife—' He did not complete the sentence. Obeying the dictates of a sudden impulse he flung the paper to the floor and hurriedly left the house.

The mist of the early evening had now changed to a thin drizzle, clammy and cold. The chill night air beat up against his flushed face with welcome persistence. It cooled the fever that throbbed in his temples. Beside himself with the agony his oluminescence (for so he conceived his examination of the man) had brought upon him, he stumbled forward like a drunken man. He must find him and ask his forgiveness. It was his duty to help him. If he were a sinner he could do no less now. His table groaned with an abundance of good things, and he had driven a hungry man away. He had driven him away.

Coming to a busier thoroughfare, he was puzzled to know which way to go. The people crowded the street; he would never be able to find him now. But he must! He dare not sit down and hold fellowship with his own soul until he had been forgiven.

He took the turn to the right; the man would be certain to make for the centre of the city. Reaching Paragon Street Station he thought that he might find him there; he would want to get back to his wife. He stood near the book-stall and watched the people trooping in and out. By comparison with the wretches he had observed in the streets, what a happy crowd was this! But there was not a man 'clean-shaven, short, thick-set, about twenty-five or twenty-six,' as his visitor of an hour before. At last, distraught and weary, he dragged himself away.

He turned down Anlaby Road, and every man he met was subjected to his scrutinizing gaze. But here also failure dogged him; he began to see the futility of his quest, and with a heavy heart he directed his steps homeward once more. The abject creatures that presented themselves as candidates for his charity increased in numbers. Their faces haunted him and it seemed to him that he walked in a world of shadows—among ghosts of men he might have saved but for his blundering. A cheery voice in his ear recalled him. 'What, Pearson, old man, you look bad! Nothing wrong, I hope?'

Pearson looked up and smiled faintly. 'Strange I should meet you,' he replied, 'an hour ago I was thinking of you, Harrison. If you're not busy I'll walk along with you. Look here.' And the minister plunged headlong into the story of the man with the class ticket. 'I knew you would help him—but it's no good now.'

Harrison smiled. 'You are too severe on yourself,' he said. 'There is a lot of misery, of course, but if you take the burdens of all these people on your shoulders your life will be a short one—and not merry.' Being a much older man he adopted the role of advisor, now and again trying to laugh him out of his seriousness, but he could not move him. Suddenly he became thoughtful, and taking his friend's arm he went on: 'I've been thinking of having a little Christmas party. You come and join me. I've been thinking about it for some time, and it will fit in with your ideas beautifully. We can't help everybody; let us help such as fall in our way. This is my idea. Hagon, the Coffee House keeper, has a big room on the first floor we can hire; he can cook omelets and steaks with vegetables in half-an-hour. You and I will scour the streets for our guests. Eh? How does that strike you?'

'It will cost a great deal.'

'Ninety pence a head, but that's nothing. I'll pay the piper. Hagon has room for thirty.'

The minister hesitated. 'You will allow me to pay half?'

'I couldn't think of it. A probationer—'

'I will pay half,' Pearson answered doggedly. 'Don't you see that through my blundering I have escaped the burden the Lord laid upon me twice?'

'Come along. If you make it a matter of conscience I can't argue with you.'

Reaching the coffee house a few minutes afterwards they made their arrangements for their party, and the two men stood in the street again.

'If you take the right I will take the left,' said Harrison briskly. 'I'll invite fifteen: you the same. Men, women, and children, the most wretched we can find.'

The minister's face brightened: here was something to do after his own heart.

Bidding his guests was an easy task: with little more effort he could have found fifty. One by one he sent them to the supper room, and when he returned his friend had already arrived and the room crowded.

'There's more than thirty here,' said Mr. Hagon.

'We'll wedge them in,' Harrison answered.

'Sit up close, my friends.' And soon steaming plates of meat and vegetables were placed before them. Mr. Pearson hurried about the room smiling upon everyone, filling the glasses with water, and reaching the bread from one to another. 'Hot tea and coffee will be ready when you have finished the meat,' he told them. 'Don't hurry, my friends, there is plenty for all.'

His friend joined him. 'There's a man here who knows you,' he said. 'There, with his back to you. He would have bolted when you came in, but I stopped him.'

The minister moved round the table, and when he saw the man's face he whispered: 'It's the man I told you of. What do you think of him?'

'He seems a bit out of place among this lot.'

Pearson did not reply, and his conviction that he had wronged the man deepened. He went round to him, and laying his hand on his shoulder, he said: 'I am glad I have found you, Mr. Ward. My conduct towards you was disgraceful.' The man's face was crimson. 'You must forgive me,' the minister continued, 'if I could explain all—'

A noise at the other end of the table made him pause, and looking up, he saw his friend push one of the women into her seat. 'Be quiet, my good woman, you disturb the others.'

'Who are you pushin'?' she cried, springing to her feet, and staring wildly at an unclean seaman standing at the head of the stairs; and the minister recognised the match woman whose story had so much impressed him a few hours before.

'Jim! Jim!' she cried, and the sailor came stumbling towards her.

'Annie, my beauty,' he mumbled, in a drunken voice. 'Here y'are at last. I couldn't find you nowhere.' And taking her into his arms, he lifted her from the table. 'You knowed I'd come back to you?' he asked, as she clung to him.

'I was to blame, Jim,' she answered tearfully, and she looked tenderly up to his drink-sodden face, kissing his slobbering mouth passionately. 'It was all my fault.'

'Come away home an' leave this lot,' he said, regarding the listening company with an injured air. 'I've plenty of money—plenty of money,' and she took his arm—'Plenty to eat, an' plenty to drink. Come on.'

Pearson, seeing the woman's peril, joined them.

'I hope, my friends, you will stay,' he said, persuasively. 'We will find room for you. If you would leave the drink—'

The woman laughed hysterically. 'It's no good you preachin' to Jim, Mister. And the woman's pinched face glowed with a new-born joy. 'Good-night, Mister, an' thank you. Away, Jim.'

They descended the stairs together, and passed out into the night.

By and by supper was over. On the advice of his friend Mr. Pearson did not attempt to improve the occasion. A cheery word or two, a hearty handshake, and, in a little while, their guests were gone. Ward, however, remained behind, and Mr. Harrison left them alone while he went to settle with the proprietor.

'You will forgive me, Mr. Ward,' the minister began, 'but I—'

'Forgive you? I have nought to forgive. I—I deceived you.'

The minister started.

'The class ticket is mine,' Ward went on, 'but I am not worthy of it. When I fall out of work I lost my hold upon God.' He paused and his lower lip trembled. 'My wife and child were starvin', and I turned my back upon religion.'

'Your burden has been too big for you, my brother,' said the minister, with tender sympathy. 'Let me help you to bear it.'

The man struggled with his emotion, for the minister's brotherliness stirred him powerfully. 'It seemed as if God had hidden His face from me.'

'I have been there,' Mr. Pearson replied slowly. 'It is good for us sometimes even to feel that! Did you cry to Him out of the depths?'

'Only when you came to me at the table. I prayed that God would give me a spirit like that.'

'Hush, my friend. It is the spirit of Jesus we need—you and me. Let us ask Him for the spirit of Jesus, and they fell on their knees there in the supper room.'

When Mr. Harrison returned the minister told him the man's story.

'My poor fellow!' he exclaimed, struggling with a lump in his throat. 'You shall dry your wife's tears. Your's shall be a happy Christmas; yet, and, if it be God's will, a bright New Year. My friend and I will help you.'

And they did.

In the small hours the minister held fellowship with his soul, and the worm of conscience did not upbraid him.

'Masterman and Son.' By W. J. Dawson, D.D. Hodder and Stoughton. 3s. 6d.

THIS is a book to be read. It is a serious volume written in the lighter vein. Dr. Dawson's deep convictions are only matched by his superb style. All his writings, and they are many, betray great literary gifts. He knows English literature, and his recent books show that he knows human nature and modern problems. Masterman has become rich in questionable ways. His only son, at the end of his university course, gradually discovers this. He falls in with a brilliant socialist writer, and in love with his daughter and faces the crisis. He must fall in line with his father's business and ways or betake himself to an unfriendly world. Many questions emerge. The story gets over the Atlantic and from cover to cover is full of modernism and intense fascination.—E. J. T.

LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

Carlisle

The annual missionary services in connection with Graham Street church were held on November 21st and 23rd. Sermons were preached at 10.30 a.m. by the Rev. Henry Yool, and at 6 p.m. by Mr. J. C. Kilvington. Both services were very well attended. On Tuesday evening the usual missionary meeting was held, the church being filled. Mr. W. B. Redmayne occupied the chair. The Revs. H. Yool and W. Watson gave addresses. The collections and subscriptions were almost trebled as compared with the previous year. The Rev. E. Newman also addressed the gathering. A feature of the meeting was the presentation by Mr. Yool of the prizes recently won by four young men in the Local Preachers Examination. Mr. D. Henderson, first prize; Mr. James Elliott, second prize; Mr. Fred Elliott, third prize; and Mr. J. A. Clark, fourth prize. The first three were first, second, and third respectively in the whole connexion.

Loughborough

Swan Street has been favoured by a visit from a famous traveller and journalist in the person of Mr. E. G. Prasatham Cotingham, formerly of the 'Madras Mail.' Mr. Cotingham, who is an Indian gentleman, conducted the services on Sunday morning and evening. On Sunday afternoon a musical service was held, when our visitor gave an address on 'The Place of India in the British Empire.' On Monday evening a lantern lecture was given on 'Imperial India' Coun. T. W. Walker, of Leicester, occupied the chair. Proceeds, £18 5s.

A successful effort in behalf of the new School Building Fund at Nottingham Road has just been held. Miss H. Richards spoke at two Sunday services, and on the Monday evening delighted her audience by very fine recitals. In the musical part she was assisted by Mr. L. Pegg, Miss M. Pegg, and Miss E. Thorman (instrumentalist), and Mr. L. Fanks (vocalist). Her visit will be long remembered.

Gidbury

Dunley Port.—A sale of work on Nov. 15th in aid of trust funds was opened by Coun. J. Baker. With this effort, together with dona-

tions promised by end of the year, we expect to realise not less than £15.

Bounds Green.—A three days' bazaar was held Nov. 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, towards debt reduction. With J. Badler, Esq., one of our own members, as opener, and T. Lavender, Esq., J.P., whose united ages reached 172, as chairman, we anticipated a gracious send-off. Unfortunately indisposition prevented the former from attending. The second day's proceedings were opened by J. W. Wilson, Esq., M.P., with C. Thomlinson, Esq., J.P., as president, supported by other members of the Council. Wednesday was the children's day, and in point of attendance led the way. A special opening ceremony, prepared by Rev. F. W. Norris, was effectively rendered by a number of children. Miss E. Russell acting as president, Miss D. Hawkes as vice-president. During the evening a silver tree, provided by one of our younger scholars, Annie Beaumont, was unveiled by Mr. T. Hadley, and yielded £2 5s. Takings to date £115.

Sheffield Bethel Mission

In connection with the Bethel Central Mission, Sheffield, grand sights have been witnessed during the last two months. While Mr. Conbeck has been compelled to be absent from his post, his place has been splendidly filled by special preachers. Mr. Willie Long served us splendidly by conducting a ten days' mission, during which time many found Christ. Nov. 14th Rev. W. Dinwale, of Chesterfield, preached with great power. On Nov. 21st the pulpit was occupied by the Supt. missionary, who preached to large congregations. Nov. 27th and 28th were seasons not easily to be forgotten. The two hours' open-air service in Charles Street was very powerful. Before we entered the chapel for the after meeting, a man and his wife, who had been listening at the open-air service, requested that they might go along immediately to sign the pledge and give their hearts to God. After entering the chapel two others decided for Christ. Sunday was a blessed day. Eight persons surrendered to Christ. Old Bethel has become the talk of the city as a centre of real evangelism.

Wells

Just completed our first missionary round of the season. Rev. J. Bowles served us as deputation. Fluences above last year. Collectors did well with cards and boxes.

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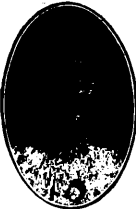
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SHIFT, COLDS!

Sir WILFRID'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

By LILY COOK.



MISS LILY COOK.

ON the broad terrace-walk of Carlton Manor, where no other human foot disturbed the virgin smoothness of the snow stood a man, staring at the blood-red sun that hung like a Chinese lantern upon the horizon. Slowly the red ball sank, and grey shadows spread themselves across the inexorable whiteness of the pure mantle that covered all the land.

Of these things Sir Wilfrid Payne was vaguely conscious as he stood within the shadows of his ancestral home on that grey December afternoon. He was conscious, too, and rather shrank from the thought, that his impulsive good nature had betrayed him into a course of action which might prove embarrassing to his guests. Sir William was the Liberal candidate for Barkston Ash Division. He was a bachelor, and had recently come into possession of the house and lands in which the Paynes had lived for many generations. He was now celebrating his accession to power by playing the host to half-a-dozen of his old Varity ohms, whom he had invited to spend Christmas at Carlton Manor. His aunt, Lady Dartmoor, had offered to come and entertain for him, but his friends had adopted with enthusiasm the idea that it should be a bachelor house party which should find its amusement in the covert and hunting-field.

Three days had been spent in earnest work among the game, with the result that one and all declared they had never enjoyed themselves so much anywhere. The vexed problem, that had brought Sir Wilfrid out alone, was still uppermost in his mind, when, a few minutes later, he stepped into the luxurious warmth and comfort of the old English hall. Blazing logs lay scuttering in the wide, open fire-place; thick rugs covered the floor. He could dimly hear the hum of voices as he strode towards the library, and opening the door, he stood in the centre of the merry group.

'I hope you fellows don't mind,' he said apologetically, 'but I've invited the Methodist minister here to dinner this evening. In view of the coming election, it is expedient to be on friendly terms with influential members of the community; and, really, he's an awfully good sort.'

There was no immediate response. An ominous silence prevailed, as the men glanced at each other with wry faces. 'Rather a quixotic notion,' drawled Lord Bawtry, 'calculated to spoil the harmony of the gathering. We are not quite the sort to be amused by a person—a Methodist into the bargain. I can't endure priggish men who pose as an example to others.'

'Oh! you are making a huge mistake,' put in Sir Wilfrid eagerly. 'He's not at all strait laced or Pharisaical. He is an Oxford Don. He's the Stevens that won the match five years ago. Don't you remember?'

'Oh! that fellow!' exclaimed Wagstaff, with awakened interest.

'Yes! I'm sorry it isn't agreeable, and it shan't occur again; but I can assure you he's a real good sort all round.'

'Of course we have no right to question the wisdom of your arrangements,' drawled Bawtry. 'Nevertheless, I'm glad this is not to form a precedent. We can all rely on your judgment that he's a good sort, for, with a wave of his immaculate hand, "are we not your chosen friends?"'

Sir Wilfrid smiled indulgently, and in laughter the discussion closed.

They were lively young fellows, not vicious, but devoted solely to amusement. They were not in the habit of mixing with men of religious tendencies. They kept to their own clique, and their own ways, and this aloofness was not conducive to good comradeship when circumstances brought them together.

At a quarter to eight Stevens was announced, and Sir Wilfrid at once introduced him to his fellow-guests. They eyed him critically, but, nevertheless, were impressed by his appearance. A stalwart young fellow, six foot, with a frank, clean-shaven face, which indicated an amount of power and thought that attracted them greatly.

Certainly he was a decided acquisition. At the dinner-table he proved himself a master of the almost extinct art of conversation. He chose his topics skillfully, and, from a sense of doubt and distrust, the men gradually passed to a feeling of confidence and mental exhilaration.

After dinner they went to smoke in the billiard-room, and Lord Bawtry, who was considered the best player, quickly discovered that Stevens, though obviously out of practice, was no mean opponent, and only managed to win by a few points.

But when he suggested pool, the minister prepared to look on.

'I make a rule never to play for money,' he said.

The rest of the party played, but soon tired, and the conversation turned on the coming election.

'I'll tell you what, you fellows,' drawled Bawtry, 'I'll take three to two that our esteemed host stands at the head of the poll at the end of January.'

'I'll take you!' exclaimed Sugden.

'Any more of you?' asked Bawtry.

'I'm prepared to lay two to one he doesn't,' said Wainwright; and in a few minutes Bawtry had entered bets with each of his friends.

Sir Wilfrid glanced uneasily at the minister before he made his bet. Somehow he felt that the turn of affairs was not quite courteous to him.

But this did not end the betting. Wainwright was prepared to wager that the Liberal Government would not be returned, but Lord Bawtry laid a level hundred that it would.

Stevens was ostensibly reading 'The Field,' but he was listening to the conversation with a dull ache at his heart. He was contrasting these wealthy young fellows with the humble inmates of a cottage he had visited during the afternoon.

The contrast was so painful that he felt he must intervene. But he lacked moral courage; besides, he told himself, remonstrance could avail nothing.

'Coward!' whispered conscience. 'What right have you to appear in the garb of a minister, if you fail at a moment like this, when a clear duty confronts you?' Stevens flung aside the paper. His face was pale; his limbs trembled beneath him.

'Excuse me, gentlemen,' he said, in an unsteady voice, 'but can you really afford to risk such large sums of money?'

'Beg pardon. What did you say,' asked Bawtry, with a contemptuous stare.

With an effort Stevens repeated his question, and Lord Bawtry replied with stinging scorn.

'I'm not a cad. I don't bet unless I'm in a position to pay.' 'That's right, Bawtry,' cried his companion, 'while his lordship added, "Your question savours of gross impertinence, sir."

'I'm aware of that,' said the minister, 'but when I sat listening to you recklessly risking large sums of money, it was intolerable. I don't want to set myself up as a saint. Heaven knows, or yet to take upon myself to judge the actions of other men, but it seems to me, with so much poverty in the world, with so much work to be done to bridge over the awful gulf between rich and poor, it's a pity to waste so much money in amusing oneself.'

'Let me tell you a story, which is the only excuse I can offer for what you are pleased to term gross impertinence.'

He paused, but they gave no sign of assent or dissent, so he proceeded.

'In a cottage, at the end of the village, live John and Sarah Brown. They have one son who has been confined to his bed with spinal disease for five years. At one time they rented a small farm. It was during a season of agriculture depression—a bad harvest, potato disease, and low prices for every description of farm produce, which represents the wealth of the tenant farmers. It was only by the strictest economy that they managed to make both ends meet.'

'Then, the son on whom they had built their hopes, was laid aside with a lingering disease, which brought additional expenditure in its train. Ruin stared them in the face.'

'Perhaps, in time, they might have been able to pay. But the late Lord Payne was abroad. They were at the mercy of a stern, unyielding bailiff, who dealt with the tenants according to his will. No tale of distress or poverty was ever listened to. No remission of rent was ever made. His creed was, pay or go. Eventually it came to that with the Browns.'

'They removed to the cottage in which they now reside. Old John was employed as a woodman on the estate, receiving a weekly wage of fifteen shillings. You will all agree that it is impossible for a man to save anything out of such a sum when there are three people to keep, and one an invalid.'

'Last winter Mr. Brown had a serious illness, and for a few weeks they were compelled to accept Parish Relief. The help so reluctantly solicited has deprived them of a pension which would have proved a great boon.'

'A week ago the old man had a stroke of paralysis. His working days are over. That means they must spend their remaining days in the workhouse.'

'Gentlemen, can you imagine what that means to them; the final blow that condemns them to a fate against which they have waged a life-long battle? Life can hold for them no deeper bitterness, no greater degradation or shame, but they neither murmur nor complain. This afternoon they told me, with quivering voices, that God had been very good to them in the past, and they could trust the future in His hands.'

'Gentlemen, when I heard you recklessly risking large sums of money, one of which would be counted a fortune in that home, I felt impelled to speak.'

There was a dead silence. Sir Wilfrid's face was troubled; his heart was sore. He had always intended to devote a portion of his wealth to some scheme for the benefit of the aged poor; but his ideas had never quite taken shape.

'I must go now,' said Stevens. 'I bid you all good-night, and I thank you for listening so attentively to my story.'

'Wait a moment,' said Lord Bawtry. 'I want to thank you for telling us this; and I admire your pluck, old fellow.'

'Fifteen bob a week, did you say. Why, forty quid would keep them going a year.'

Stevens nodded.

'I'll tell you what,' said Bawtry, 'I've made the bet, and shall of course honour it, but I'll give you fifty for the old folks. Any advance on fifty, gentlemen, looking earnestly at his companions.'

'I'll give another fifty,' said Wainwright.

'And so will I,' said Sugden.

'Put me down for twenty,' said Wagstaff.

'And I'll give twenty,' said Staines.

'You quite overwhelm me,' said the minister. 'I did not intend to abuse the rights of hospitality, and beg, but—'

'It's all right, old chap,' said Sir Wilfrid, 'sapping him on the shoulder. 'I'll give one hundred. I never before realised what an immense responsibility is attached to the wealth we sometimes hold so lightly. The impulse is upon me to do something for the deserving poor, whose helplessness and inability to maintain themselves in past years has shut the door of the nation Bounty, in their face. I pledge my word that none in this constituency, whose only vice is their extreme poverty, shall lack the necessary things of life.'

'God bless you,' exclaimed the minister as he looked into the noble face, so lit with the inner earnestness as to be almost transfigured.

'How will you have the money,' asked Bawtry. 'In cheques, or gold?'

'May I suggest that you take it to the cottage yourselves,' said Stevens. 'You would have your reward in pure gratitude.'

'Suppose we personate Father Christmas,' said Wainwright, who was of a dramatic turn of mind.

'By Jove! you've hit it,' cried Bawtry, 'I'm game.'

'What do you think of it, Stevens?' asked Sir Wilfrid. 'A capital idea. I'll join you,' replied the minister. 'There are costumes and a make-up in the old school-room,' said Sir Wilfrid. 'Let us prepare for the performance at once.' And the men rushed off as eagerly as a troop of school-boys.

It was Christmas Eve. The hands of the grandfather clock pointed to midnight, and still John and Sarah Brown sat side by side, with no light save the flickering embers of the dying fire.

Sarah's head was bowed on her hands; the tears trickled down her wrinkled cheeks.

'Don't take on so, dear,' said the old man, 'It is His will; but it won't be for long; and they don't separate old folks in the workhouse, now.'

Mrs. Brown made no reply, but sobbed audibly. Oh! it was hard. She acknowledged God's rule in everything. She had bowed in resignation when their first born had been snatched from them in the pride of early womanhood. She had acquiesced when the son in whom they had delighted was laid aside a helpless cripple. She had only rebelled when the last stroke had come, and though, for a time, she had refused to face the inevitable, she knew now that resistance was at an end. With an effort the old man raised his hand and laid it on his wife's shoulder. 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want,' he began in an unsteady voice. 'What's that, wife?'

There was the sound of footsteps outside, a hand was on the latch. The aged couple stared aghast and bewildered, as a tall figure, arrayed in scarlet, gorgeously trimmed with fur, appeared in the doorway, followed by a group of gorgeous figures.

'Peace be to this house,' said the foremost figure.

'Thank you,' replied John. 'Who are you?'

'I am Father Christmas, commonly called Santa Claus. These are my attendants.'

'I'm sorry, but we've sought for you,' stammered Sarah.

'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' replied Father Christmas, and at a given signal his followers came forward, each bearing a miscellaneous parcel, which was laid on the table in front of the amazed couple.

Then Father Christmas stepped forward. 'I have heard that ye are worthy, therefore reap ye the golden harvest which follows a life of toil,' and he threw, one by one, one hundred coins on the table.

Mrs. Brown caught the gleam of gold and grasped her husband's arm nervously.

'Now may you have a Happy Christmas and a glad New Year,' said their benefactor, as he thrust a roll of crisp bank-notes into the woman's trembling fingers, and the troupe filed out.

The old people sat speechless for some minutes, then they lighted a candle and gazed in awe at the pile of money. They had never seen such a heap of gold.

'It can't be for us,' said Sarah, 'there's some mistake.'

'Fetch Stevens,' said the old man. 'He may be able to throw some light on the affair.'

Mr. Stevens was at home, and went at once to the cottage. He smiled as he surveyed the table. 'God sent it to you,' he said. 'He has put this thing into the heart of someone who wanted to do good without it being known.'

'Whoever they be, God bless them,' ejaculated the old folks.

Deep Gloom on Earth was Lying.

E'en as the year is dying
Comes Christmas, death defying:
For when the long night was most drear
The Day-Spring came the world to cheer;
Heav'n's light illumined earth
At the Messiah's birth!

Deep gloom on earth was lying,
No seer was prophesying,
And Judah's hope lay as tho' dead;
No longer by a hero led—
A nation lost of heart,
Of Cesar's realm a part.

But not as was expected
He came; yet resurrected
Dead hope and caused true love to live,
And at the last His life to give,
Rushed to the death by those
His kindred—but his foe!

Now the Despised is reigning,
His lustre never waning,
The Lord of Heav'n, the King of earth,
The Child Emmanuel whose birth,
With tuneless, gladsome lay
We hail this Christmas Day!

Let peace, Lord, reign forever,
And passions, which oft sever
Our friendship, die and never rise,
Then love across our pathway lies.
Love only, love alone
Shall be our empire's throne!

Llancaihw

R. H. NICHOLLS.

'Sir Robert W. Perks, Bart., M.P.' The Story of His Life. By Denis Crane. Herbert Carter. 2s. 6d. net. THOSE readers who have met with the author's 'John Clifford' and 'James Flanagan' will come to this book full of high expectation, and they will not be disappointed; for Denis Crane has done no better work than this. There is not a dull chapter in the book. And while the narrative will be valued in the main on account of the one figure so graphically and artistically portrayed, it will also have great value because of the sidelights thrown upon some other lives and upon great movements with which Sir Robert Perks has been so prominently connected. Perhaps the most interesting part of the life is that at which deals with what may be called the liberalising of Methodism and its share therein. The work should circulate over a wide area. It cannot fail to inspire many to the highest form of life.—J. K.

The Largest Family of Primitive Methodists.

THE FAIRHURSTS OF SHEVINGTON.

Rev. J. Arthur Alderson.



MR. WILLIAM FAIRHURST.

man and put another in prison in order to bring him to his senses, but when He did convert him, He did the job thoroughly, for He took away his appetite for drink altogether, and John became a local preacher, and did excellent service until his death.

At the age of twenty-two Henry Fairhurst married Jane Naylor, of Wroughtington, the neighbouring parish, and together they lived for fifty-three years, and brought up a family of thirteen children—eight sons and five daughters. The father worked in the pit, and as a labourer, and never earned more than fifteen shillings per week, his wife augmenting the little income by filling coal waggons. This was in the days of Protection, when flour cost about four shillings a stone, sugar sixpence a pound, and tea from 4s. to 6s. per lb. But these were luxuries they seldom tasted, lard being used as a substitute for butter, and water poured on toasted crusts as an apology for tea. The staple food of the family was porridge, made of rough oatmeal. The education provided was very meagre; all the schooling the children had was in a private house, under the tuition of an old man named Dow, who charged fourpence per week, which price made it impossible for any of the youngsters to take a very extensive course. The father could neither read nor write until after his marriage, when his wife taught him.

For a long time there was not a place of worship nearer than the Standish Parish church, and there the children went until the Primitive Methodists missioned Shevington. The first meeting place they established was in a hired room over a joiner's shop, where services were regularly held, and a Sunday school commenced. Many an interesting story is told of the meetings held in this room, and trophies won for the Master, through the earnest endeavours of humble-minded men who laboured there. A quaint brother was preaching in the room, and was disturbed by one of the scholars who sat in the front row of benches. The preacher admonished him, and then went on with his sermon, but the boy was soon again up to his youthful pranks. Again the preacher stopped, and this time said with great solemnity, 'Tommy, you are a very bad boy, and if you give me any further trouble I shall tell your father about you to-morrow. I would tell your father now, only he is asleep at the back of the room.'

At the age of thirty-three Henry Fairhurst was brought under good influence, at a tea meeting at Wroughtington, in the time of Rev. J. Judson's superintendency of the Chorley cir-

cuit. In those days 'the cup that cheers' was not followed by gossip, but by prayer and testimony; and whilst sitting at the tea table and listening to men and women giving their rich Christian testimony, Henry was convinced of his lost state as a sinner, sought salvation as a penitent, and God lifted upon him the light of His countenance, and he received a clear manifestation of the Divine love. The change wrought in him was visible to all who knew him. The once light and trifling young man became serious and thoughtful. He joined the class and was put on the plan as a local preacher, the circuit then consisting of eighteen places, and was supplied by two ministers and thirty-three locals. In those days conversions were common; there was never a sermon preached without a lively expectation of results. The mission spirit was keen, special services and protracted meetings were regular events, and people walked miles to attend the love-feasts. In one of the love-feasts, after Joseph Fowler had been giving his testimony, there was a pause, whereupon he said, 'Nar, folk, get up and tell us what the Lord has done for yer,' when Henry Hayes, a tall thin man, said, 'It's not those who make the loudest noise that's gotten 't' most religion.' On returning home after the service one man said to another, 'Did that see Long Harry pour that bucket of water on't fire at lovefeast.'

A chapel was built at Shevington in 1859, and Henry and his son William helped to dig the foundations and erect the walls. How proud they were to enter the new building when completed, and what glorious times have been held therein. The services in those early days were very noisy, responses were frequent and loud. (On one occasion Wilson Barrett was preaching, and in the middle of his sermon Robert Brimlow kept walking up and down the aisles admonishing the boys and girls who were talking; this upset Wilson, who stopped and turned to Brimlow, and said, 'If that were preaching and I were listening, I would make all the noise I could.' Robert respond-



THE FAIRHURST FAMILY.

ed by shouting, 'Thee go on with thi' preaching, thar's persons all to peccen.' On one occasion a local brother was having a lengthy time, and it had got to four o'clock, and he was still in his third, when a man in the pews pulled out his watch, and lifting it up, called the preacher's attention to the fact of its being time to close. The preacher replied, 'How the time does fly when one gets a little away from his subject.' The bearer immediately started the preacher by saying, 'Thar's niver been near the subject yet.'

Henry was a lover of his Bible, and as Sunday was the only time when the family were at breakfast together, he never missed having the Bible read and family prayer. His wife was a strong-minded woman, and even in the days when their father was a heavy drinker she would see they went to Sunday school; and to-day they cherish fond and grateful memories, and speak in glowing terms of their mother. When the eldest son, William, reached his twenty-first birthday he went on the plan as a local preacher, and has now been on the plan forty-three years; another son, Henry, has also been on the plan for about thirty years. The only break in the family occurred in 1897, when John, the second son, passed away; the remaining twelve have all married and settled in the neighbourhood, and with one exception have brought up large families, who have all passed through our Sunday schools and are loyal Primitive Methodists. In fact there are no less than 190 in the family. Within a radius of about two or three miles we have four chapels in which 109 Fairhursts worship. At Almond Brook there are 66, including the children in the school; at Standish, 16; Shevington, the place from whence the parents sprang, has only six left, these being the eldest son, William, with his family, and Crook 16.

In connection with the building of the chapel at Shevington a division of opinion took place, which led to a split in the church. The controversy was about the site on which the chapel should stand. Some were eager for it to be erected at the Nook in the parish, and others wished it to be just across the brook, which presented a

more desirable site, but the objection to this was the fact that the other side of the brook, although only a few yards away, was in the Wroughtington parish; and when finally the chapel was built on this site, those who could not bear to think it had been taken out of the parish severed themselves from the society. They went and hired a room in what was then called the Barracks, a piece of land belonging to the colliery, and there they held services and built up a fresh cause. Out of this seeming evil good came, for they soon developed their resources, and gaining numerical strength they decided to build, and a chapel was erected at Almond Brook, where for years we have had an interesting church, which is in the near future to be turned into a school, and a new church erected at a cost of £1,000. During the latter part of Henry's life he worshipped at Almond Brook, having built a house there. Here his son Henry worshipped also, and his marrying a young lady at Standish, about a mile away, led to the opening up of a cause there also. We have now a very fine block of property at Standish, costing over £2,000, and the second preacher lives there.



MR. JACK FAIRHURST.

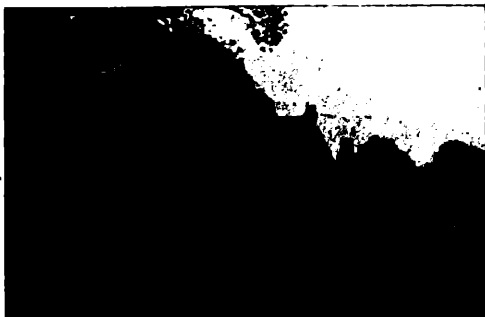
Before the father's conversion there was difficulty in securing hospitality for the preachers who came to mission the village, some of them walking long distances, but from the day of his joining the society there was an open door for all the preachers, a custom which has been followed by all his children. Aaron Wilson and his brother, with another preacher from Chorley, went to hold open-air services at Shevington, and after singing and speaking in the streets all the morning, they went into the lanes to pick blackberries for dinner, as no one had offered them a meal. In the afternoon they conducted another service, and then trudged back home to Chorley, a distance of eight miles. This never occurred again after Henry's conversion. Aaron and his brother were once missioning the village on a very snowy day, and after the elder had spoken in the street, and the snow was still falling fast, the younger said 'Aaron, let's give it up and go home, no one will come out to hear on a day like this,' whereupon the elder said, 'Stick to it, lad, yonder a woman peep, ing through the window, and she has got tears in her eyes. (Glory be to God) He is going to bless us to-day.' And, He did in a wonderful manner, for they had the joy of knowing that God struck conviction into more than one heart on that snowy day. The mother of these two brave young men used to rise at four o'clock on a Sunday morning because, said she, 'I want to have a LONG Sabbath.' How different to many of to-day, whose chief object seems to be in making the Sabbath as short as possible.

William, the eldest son, who still lives in the village of Shevington, is a devoted worker in the chapel, and is looked upon as the Bishop of the parish. He went to work at the pit when he was only eight years of age and earned only four pence a day. His brothers also commenced work at an early age. At the pit they were brought into contact with the worst forms of vice, but thanks to the godly example of their parents, and the principles of industry and thrift instilled into them in early years despite the disadvantages of childhood, all the brothers and sisters have turned out well, and are in comfortable circumstances to-day. They recognise that the church of their parents has been the making of them, and in return are devoting their best strength and giving of their substance to further its interests, and are training their children in the same good way.

When William was quite a boy he was choir-master in the little sanctuary, and in those days they gave the hymns out to lines at a time owing to the fact that the people were too poor to purchase their own hymn books, and many being unable to read. The lining out of the hymns was therefore an important part of the service, and as much attention was bestowed upon this as upon the sermon. He tells how one preacher gave out 'Before Jehovah's awful throne' in such a manner as to move the congregation to tears before he got to the end of the verse.

Henry died in March 1896, at the age of 72, and his wife Jane lived to the ripe old age of 78, passing hence in 1903, leaving behind them a noble family.

William, the eldest son, has two sons and five daughters, one of the sons being a local preacher. John, the second son, passed away some two years ago. He had a family of fifteen children, eleven of whom are living, and one son is a very acceptable local preacher. Edward has nine children. Henry has also nine children, one son being a local preacher; James has nine children, and so also has Thomas, his eldest son Jack being a most earnest worker at Crooke and as secretary of the trust and school, choir-master and organist he is rendering excellent service to the church. George, the next son, is married, but without any family. Joseph, the youngest son, has a family of four children. The five daughters, Alice, Mary, Ann, Jane, and Elizabeth, are all married and have grown-up families, and some of their children are married with growing families, so that there is every prospect of the name of Fairhurst, which is so greatly respected in the district, being heard of for many years to come.



SHEVINGTON CHAPEL.

HOW THE EARLY PREACHERS FARED.

Some Curious Homes

By Rev. Henry Woodcock.

DURING the early decades of our connexion, our preachers spent most of their time in the villages finding head and board (gratis) where they could. A few well-circumstanced people gave them a warm welcome to the best they had. But the poor also showed them much kindness. Labourers knew how to be generous when food stuffs were forty per cent. higher and wages thirty per cent. lower than they are to-day. The weekly wages of some of these labourers were not enough to meet their wants. Even widows with undrafted children took in our pioneers. In their cottages they found homes, in their affections a place, and in their prayers a share. How they did all this is a puzzle, but they did it. Let us look at a few of these village homes.

A Home by the Sea.

The hostess was a cultured, refined, well-read, lady-like person, who had served for some years as a company-keeper to well-to-do families on the Continent. Preachers who fancied that a cup of tea and a bisonit was a fit preparation for the Sabbath's services she could not tolerate. 'They always preach in great weakness, in more senses than one,' she would say. She fairly broke down my notion, that abstinence from food was conducive to effective preaching, and forced me, contrary to my habits and inclinations, to take a hearty dinner, adding, 'You'll preach all the better for that, and I never back-slid from 'the right way.' 'No man,' she would say, 'can preach well, unless he is fortified by a substantial mid-day meal.' Her *menu*, served on the French plan, awakened admiration. It seemed almost a crime to thrust knife, fork, and spoon into such a graceful masterpiece of gastronomic art, and was to you if you did not demolish what she set before you. Sometimes, to save further presence, we would say, 'For what we have received, etc.,' when she would exclaim, 'My child! my child! surely you have not done! You must taste this, and this, and this.' Her French coffee, which we had to sip three times a day, was a luxury to be remembered. She had a grand cure-all for colds, from which the preachers often suffered after that bleak coast. It was, 'Wrap your head in a blanket; put your feet in hot water; take a pint of warm-ginger, seasoned with rum, and rub your nose with tallow.' We often tried it—minus the rum and tallow—but, then, as the virtues of the remedy was said to be mainly in these two ingredients, we often went unaided.

We always had to offer up our private prayers at night, at the fireside, while our hostess was warming the bed, and when a proper heat had been attained, in her fine lady-like voice, she would say, 'Now, my child, you've prayed long enough. I'm sure. Please come at once.' Her last words were, 'God bless you, my child, and may you be the sleep of safety and of health, and see that you don't come down till 9 a.m.' But at 7 a.m. there was a gentle knock at the door, and a small tray with a cup of French coffee and a bisonit, to 'give you a relish for your breakfast, my child.' There was an unwritten law that talk should be held largely in abeyance till 4 p.m., but then our tongues began to wag. She was better read than many preachers, and having a small income she often bought a book when the preacher had done with it. She was annoyed at our small stipend, and thought it a hard case that a young preacher who had to instruct others should be driven almost to distraction to know how to get hooks. I once offered her a copy of *Pro-Admiration Earth and Man Primeval*. 'And what is it about, my child?' she asked. 'It is about the state of our globe before the creation of Adam, and how our first parents behaved themselves in Eden before they sinned.' 'And did Adam write it, my child?' 'No! Dr. Cooke, of London, wrote it.' 'Then I won't buy it, my child. Adam was the only man who could write a reliable book on that subject, my child. That is not a suitable book for me or for you, either, my child.' 'As one whom his mother comforteth'—such was this kind, wise, polite, saintly, and motherly woman, to the writer. Peace be to her ashes.

Pleasant Cottages.

Some of these were the smallest places; the meanest residences, one storied; thatched-roofed; mud-walled; clay-floored; in winter they looked cold, dilapidated, comfortable; the last places in which to spend an ideal winter evening. But across the threshold, and, ten to one, if in Yorkshire or Lincolnshire, the good housewife, credited with being 'house-proud,' had made the cottage as neat as good taste and deft fingers could make it; as cosy and comfortable as many a richer dwelling. 'Lovely spots,' the Rev. G. Lamb used to call them. One preacher said, 'I could eat my dinner off the hearth-stove.' The floor was rubbed with rudd, and carpeted with sand, through a collender. The furniture was as bright as elbow-grease could make it. A few flowers on the windowsill displayed their beauty and fragrance. At night the blind was drawn down and the candle lit, which often sufficed, burnt brightly. The preacher always occupied the place of honour near the chimney corner. Shapely-out logs of wood crackled in the grate. The kettle was sure to be hissing on the hob. A few pictures, of course, adorned the white-washed walls. On one side a picture of *Hamlet*, in scarlet coats, the hounds in full cry. Near it was *Dick Turpin*, riding, bareheaded, his famous mare, *Black Bess*, over a five-barred gate. On another side you would find *Christian*, with the *Burden on his back*, or contending with *Giant Despair*, or else making his woful way through the valley of the shadow of death. Over the mantel-piece might be seen the steel portraits of Bourne and Clowes, out out of the magazines. In a corner there was a small book-shelf, suspended from the wall by a scarlet cord, containing a *Bible*, *Hymn Book*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Baxter's Saints Everlasting Rest*, *Wesley's Sermons*, and the *Magazine*; the latter bound in half calf, preserved as heirlooms for coming generations. Uptairs—wall all was spotlessly clean there. While there was all this in side, outside, in spring, summer, and autumn, the cottage was leaf-embowered.

—If Dean Hole's saying be true—'He who would have beautiful roses in his garden must have beautiful roses in his

heart!—then we don't wonder that some of these cottages were very beautiful. The gardens were often gay with old-fashioned, sweet-scented flowers—lilies, asters, pansies, carnations, forget-me-nots, roses—scarlet, yellow, and white—which, when in full bloom, diffused a fragrance like somebody's cocoa, 'grateful, comforting, and refreshing.' Bees-hives were not wanting, and all the honey was not taken to the market. Jam was made and enjoyed in these cottages before Mr. Hartley was born. Often a bouquet, plucked from the fairest flowers, was sent to the preacher's wife. One night the late Rev. T. Smith, of Leeds, was returning by train from a village appointment with one of these gifts in his hand, looking as proud as if he handled his father's will. 'Beautiful! beautiful!' said Peter Mackenzie, who rode in the same compartment. 'I wish I had one like it to take to my dear wife.' 'Take it, Mr. Mackenzie,' said the little man. 'You are welcome to it.' 'No! No! No!' 'Now, do take it; I shall get one quite as good to-morrow night.' 'Thanks, Smith, many thanks.' When, pulling half-a-pound of tea out of his coat pocket, he said, 'Here Smith, give that to your wife, and God bless her.' An equal exchange is no robbery; but in this case the 'Prim' got the best of the bargain, and we cannot grieve on that account. Can we wonder that a few hours spent in such homes, with a few pious, loving souls, yielded a joy not always to be found in richer homes? The Bible was read, hymns sung, and prayers offered up, in which husband, wife, and children often joined. In a word, grace governed such families, and they enjoyed more happiness than the corresponding classes in large towns.

Curious Kinds of Food.

On one mission station in the South, the viands were like German sausages—a complete mystery. The prevailing food was barley bread, oat cakes, chipped potatoes, boiled turnips, carrots, and cabbages, and a small quantity of not very sustaining broth. Bacon gives as much relish to a boiled chicken as good sense to a pretty woman; but on this station they never saw fresh meat; bacon seldom; chicken never. The Rev. J. Warner said, 'It was bacon and potatoes on Sunday, and potatoes and bread, without bacon, on the other days of the week.' Another preacher dined off a pie filled with potatoes, seasoned with shrimps, 'to make,' as the poor woman said, 'a drop of nice gravy.' At — they used to make a very indigestible pudding. One day, after dinner, the children complained of pains under their pinnae. 'But,' said the preacher, 'it's naught.' Soon after he was struck with pains in his chest, and a M.D. had to be called in. A boiling of beans and turnips was a frequent dish at the same table, with other dishes equally inexpensive and not particularly appetising.

The writer once took tea with a very poor man. There was a clean hearth, a bright fire; indeed, one of the neatest cottages I ever entered. Before the fire there was piled up into the teens of slices of toast, soaked in golden syrup (vulgarily called 'treacle'), for the family comprised eight persons. It is a poor heat that never rejoices. I had often tasted life's bitterness; now I had a taste of life's sweetness, and I could not say which I preferred. But some of our preachers had harder food to masticate than treacled toast. 'That's tough enough, my friend, to make a young ploughman's jaws spring up like a rat-trap,' said a young man as he watched an aged preacher, after a long walk, gnawing a bit of offal. And, certainly, it seemed to need the teeth of a lion, and the digestion of an ostrich, to turn it into nourishment. But hunger is a sharp thorn, and the almost toothless old man, with long grey beard and glittering eyes, kept gnawing away till 'the thorn' ceased to pain him. No dog would have wagged his tail at what was left.

Tea and Spices.

The Duchess of Sutherland one day met an old woman whose husband (one of the Duke's tenants) was bedridden, and kindly asked after the invalid. 'Indeed, your Grace,' was the reply, 'he's not well, at all, at all—and no wonder to him—for he'll not take a porridge, nor he'll not take a brose, but it's tea, tea, *contemnally*.' Now '*contemnally*' is said to be a hybrid word, made up of 'continually' and 'eternally.' Eighty years ago tea was credited with certain soothing and curative properties that made it an oft-used beverage; its use during the days of Protection, G. A. B., doubtless added to its popularity. It was the one that cheered. The great Robert Hall suffered from rheumatism pains in his back and strong tea often gave him relief. Fifty years ago I had the honour of using a small cup, thrice filled, from which Mr. Hall, during one of his paroxysms of pain, drank thirteen cups in succession! Our early entertainers, however rough and scant the food, almost invariably tried to gild their poverty with cups of tea, not always of the strongest flavour.

One of our entertainers, who had spoiled the taste of her eyes and the whiteness of her teeth, by half a century's smoking, had, at almost every meal, 'the cup that cheers but not inebriates.' Had the quality been equal to the quantity, then the preachers must have been in a state of constant overfulness. But the weed was doled out almost by grains; one small teaspoonful serving half-a-dozen guests, and it was as tasteless and colourless as the white of an egg. It was a delight to 'good old Sarah,' if the preacher, after satisfying himself with the flavourless weed, turned from the table to fill his pipe with the fragrant weed (and a few did so), and a special delight if he would 'take' just a drop of me home-brewed beer, which never did harm to man or beast, but it was a rule with most of our preachers to let that tempting beverage alone. Special occasions were honoured by what 'Sarah' used to call 'Dripping Cake' increased in its tastiness by a little spice—the spice—was a few caraway seeds. A few homes reminded me of the ornate's egg, which had a few good points, but so many bad ones that it had to be removed from the table. For days together the preachers often went without a satisfying meal, and ollemed with hunger, exhausted by toil, or cramped with cold, 'they often fell,' says the Rev. J. Garner, 'to the ground.' But they did not complain. They were patient, brave, self-sacrificing men, and yet they often acknowledged that their entertainers were the greatest heroes and heroines, and they knew how to appreciate their ungrudging self-denial.

Pumpkin Pie.

One Sabbath morning I crossed the Thames to preach Anniversary Sermons at a small village. My home was to be with 'a very poor man.' After walking several miles be-

neath a sweltering sun, amid suffocating dust, I reached the cottage at noon, and found that my hostess had been called to attend an afflicted neighbour. A hungry man is not particular so long as there is something to eat, and I felt as Billy Dawson did when his mother said to him, 'Thou hast a crop for all sorts of corn.' A big pie was put on the table and as I drew near it I fancied I smelled a strong savoury odour within. 'Do 'loike pumpkin pie? It be very good.' 'Yes, my appetite is like charity, it never faileth.' I instinctively supposed that pumpkin pie, like potato pie, would contain some fleshy ingredients. Alas! it turned out to be nothing more or less than a pumpkin, cut into about six pieces, only half-cooked, without either meat or gravy. Putting a large slice of the pie on my plate, my hostess said, 'Will 'e treacle, or salt?' I 'loikes treacle, sir.' 'I'll take salt,' I replied. But what was I to do with it? The good man made me welcome to the best he had, and seemed proud to entertain me, and I resolved not to grieve him by leaving a morsel on my plate. The crust I ate with a relish, but the fruit!—what was I to do with that? I cut it into small pieces, and then put the contents of my right hand pocket into my left one. Just behind my host hung a picture of the battle of Waterloo, Wellington and Napoleon being prominent figures. Having made every preparation for the transference of the superabundance of 'good things,' I pointed my host to the picture with my left hand, exclaiming, 'Look at Wellington! Look at Napoleon!' etc. While he looked the pumpkin was in my pocket. 'Surely you haven't done?' said the good man. 'Have a bit more.' 'No, thank you; I've had quite enough.' We had a good and substantial tea of plain bread. Asked at night to have a bit more pumpkin pie, I said, 'Much obliged, but I was never more satisfied. Many thanks.' He said to a friend, 'Mr. Woodcock be a nice man. We had only pumpkin pie for dinner, but he said he was never more satisfied. He do be a nice man.' That poor man's weekly wage was not enough to meet his weekly wants. It was at this man's house, I believe that the Rev. T. Penrose dined, as Missionary Deputation, He could enjoy a hearty meal, for he suffered from diabetes, to which he finally succumbed, and he said, 'This is a bit of nice flesh!' 'It be!' said his host, 'and it is the first bit of fresh meat we have had since Christmas.' Mr. Penrose was a generous man, and he knew what it was to feed the poor, and on leaving the village he called at the butcher's shop and sent his host a nice joint.

Homes with Chimney Sweepers.

The rummest, though not the roomiest, home I ever had was at—well, let us call it Dolliborough, for it was deadily dull and despiriting, especially to Primitive Methodist preachers. (One of our early preachers spent a night within its prison walls.) In the list of homes left by my predecessor was this: 'Mr. C—S—, clothier and timber merchant.' I had been round the circuit and found good homes, and as this was to be with a 'merchant,' I pictured a room, with fire, table, pens, and paper. Nearing the place, I said to an old man who was repairing the highway, 'Can you tell me where Mr. C—S—, clothier and timber merchant, lives?' 'No, and nobody else can, for he don't live here at all; but, he added, 'be you the new preacher?' 'Yes!' 'Oh, it's C—S—, match seller and chimney sweep, you want to be at.' My predecessor's description, written in a joke, was quite true; only the timber was—matchbox, and the cloth—soot. The home was n't the most inviting, and I soon found that I had to take my meals along with three young sweeps clad in their nocturnal garb.

Many years ago there was in a town, in one of the 88th States of America, a public well with two buckets attached—one for the whites, the other for blacks—but at this house, master, mistress, minister, and three young sweeps sat at the same table, ate out of the same dish, and drank out of the same soot-beamed mug. I asked my hostess to let me have a glass of water. 'There it is!' she said, pointing to the mug. 'But the boys have drunk out of it,' I replied. 'What of that? there's nowt nicer than a bit of clean soot,' taking a good drink from the discarded mug. Soot at that time sold for so much a bag, and that, perhaps, was the reason why she thought proper to eat and drink it; so I went and washed down my soot-seasoned dinner at the pump. I could not help observing that my hostess had to ransack her tiny and soot-beamed larder to provide the mid-day meal. My gastronomic tastes underwent a sudden change; the things I once loved now I hated. I said, 'You see, Mrs. S., I have to study very hard for my Sunday work, and I don't want to baffle my brains by eating any indigestible food. A boiled egg and two or three potatoes, with their covering on, will suit me best.' She said, 'I think you are quite right, and I'm sure you'll make a good preacher,' which was mutually gratifying. I slept on a bed of the same family tinge twice in the depth of winter; afterwards I rose with the boys at 4 a.m., and, after walking several miles, reached the circuit town before the tradesmen had taken down their shutters. After shaking off the clouds of soot that had settled on my garments, and several ablutions at the pump had restored my ordinary appearance, I sat down to a good breakfast, with an appetite sharpened by involuntary abstinence.

The food at Dolliborough was plentiful, and, though dark in colour, we were always welcome; but that was not enough to make it go down pleasantly. I once spent a Sabbath at Dolliborough, and am bound to say that the last vestige of soot had been washed from the husband's usually dark face. When he entered the collection (2s.) in the Society's account book, I observed he washed his hands afterwards. A fountain pen would have been a grand equipment for the preacher in that home, for the ink was much mixed with soot. The 'super' spent but one night under that roof, for being 'a man of means,' he paid a man to accompany him on his journeys.

'Quiet Talks on Home Ideals' By S. D. Gordon and M. K. Gordon. Fleming & Revell. 2s. 6d. net.

THIS is another of 'The Quiet Talks' series. Our readers have been introduced to the author's books on Prayer, Power, and Service, and now he comes to us with an equally powerful volume on Home Ideals. The style is lucid, the language usually pictorial, the illustrations fresh and luminous. The chapters of the book are on Ideals, United Lives, The Home, The Fruit of the Home, Fatherhood and Motherhood, The Babe, Heredity, and Training. On these topics there are most helpful pages that cannot fail to heighten the ideal of the home and of life generally.

HOW I FOUND MY MOTHER.

A Search of Thirty-Eight Years.

BY REV. W. GELLEY.

If the reader of my life's story had passed down Brown Street near the Broomilaw, Glasgow, some twenty-five years ago, he would have seen a tall spare man, in ministerial garb and silk hat, standing in the midst of the street uncovered, with his face to the heavens, with eyes closed, praising God that instead of being Barabbas to hang at the end of an English gibbet, he was a Barabbas, proclaiming the saving love of Jesus Christ. That life story I will relate to you.

I first saw life in the year 1843 in the town of Gateshead, on the banks of the 'Coaly Tyne.' I had one brother, and a sister who was ten years older than myself. My ancestors were a race of iron workers. There is a family tradition that they came from Germany and settled down at Newburn up the river Tyne the original name being 'Gully,' which in after years became Gelley. They have lived on Tyne-side over a hundred years. Their work was of a most exhausting nature; they made much money and spent it freely, the greater part in drink. My father was a big strong man, and a great drinker. He weighed eighteen stones four lbs, and yet was full of activity and of great strength. When my sister was born he gave away

A Barrel of Ale and a Gallon of Rum

to his companions. It was thought to be the essence of meanness to do less if you had the money to do it. For some time he worked in Glasgow, and as he stood one day at the factory gates he saw Glasgow lassies leaving the mills when their work was done. Among these was a young woman who became his wife. It was a case of love at first sight, for he said when he saw her leaving the mills, 'I will marry that lass or I will never marry at all.' My mother was of highland descent, born at Maryhill, Glasgow. Her father was a native of Argyshire. Their married life was a brief one, as my father died when I was three years old, and when he was only thirty three. He was taken ill at six o'clock one night and was dead at eight the same night. I have therefore not the slightest conception of my father or my early home. My sister being ten years old has a full remembrance of all that took place, and I was her little brother whom she loved most intensely. It was well for me that I had one so tender and kind, as hard as my lot has been, it would have been a great deal more bitter.

At my father's death, mother made tracks back to her native home in Glasgow. We made our way to my Aunt Sally's, 62 Brown Street, off the Broomilaw. A bad snow it was! Then we lived at World's End, and also Clyde Street, from there into a low lodging house kept by a black man. In those

We lived, starved, and stole.

Our sufferings were of the extremest kind, begging from door to door for a mouthful of bread, and nearly dead with cold. I suffered much more than my sister, who used to go and steal people's children and get food and warmth. - I was always with my mother in the alley and ready to go forth to beg, steal, or starve. Some of the neighbours took pity on my hard lot and treated me kindly, others drove me from their doors as a dog. Some monetary help came from England from my uncle, but it went in drink, not food or clothes. So desperate was our lot that I found myself in the vagrant ward, and sometimes in a common lodging house. My sister was prostrate with fever, and was removed to the workhouse. Things had reached their worst, and nothing remained but the workhouse for all of us, as mother had no means of living. But then the children belonged to the parish of Gateshead, and the mother to Glasgow. So the Christian poor law must separate mother and children in the holy name of charity. To England we were sent, and mother was allowed to sail with us from Leith in a vessel called the 'Vesta.' We arrived at Newcastle on Sunday morning. Mother walked with us as far as St. Mary's Church, Gateshead, and there she stopped, and taking her wee liddle by the hand, saying, 'Good bye, Willy, I will see you until you are big! big! big!' These words were certainly prophetic, for she never saw me again for thirty-eight years. She returned to the tender mercies of the Glasgow parish authorities. And we? ah, where should we go? Did we not belong, body, soul and rage to the parish of Gateshead? and that would have been our fate but for the best and kindest friend I ever met in this world. My Uncle William took us to his heart and home. My sister entered service, and bravely fought her way through life.

A new and happy experience was mine. I had at last found a friend and home, and who can tell what that meant to the Glasgow Street Arab? I had passed from poverty to fortune. It was most fortunate for me that I found my way to the Ballast Hills Sunday school, for it was a vital element in my redemption. My uncle, who in his early life had been an earnest Wesleyan Methodist, had now become a confirmed sceptic, and was a member of the Newcastle Secular Society. Two unfavourable influences impressed me much. I was introduced to factory life, and as all my ancestors had been ironworkers and forgers, I was sent to the same trade. Tyne-side forgers were noted for drunkenness and improvidence, and though they made big money they spent it as fast, or faster, than they earned it. They were wicked to a painful degree.

Religion was only laughed to scorn.

Foul language and blasphemy were the daily events of my young life. In addition to this unhappy influence, my uncle's library was full of infidel books—Palmer's 'Age of Reason,' Cooper's 'Text Book of Bible Contradictions,' and 'The Reasoner.' I read these books and pamphlets, and my mind was filled with the stork objections, and with no small amount of vanity I went to the Sunday school to try and puzzle my teacher and turn the laugh against him. This caused much interest and excitement in the class, for it numbered about sixteen youths like myself. Well for me my teacher was a calm, level-headed man, with a fine Christian temper, and often enough the laugh was turned on myself, which I found was quite a different thing, and not so pleasant.

The death of my uncle proved a healthy influence on my mind. His illness was long and serious. He was visited by the Rev. James Jackson and Rev. Ralph Fenwick. The latter impressed him most powerfully, and he longed for his visit. Unfortunately Mr. Fenwick thought he was making no impression and ceased to come any more. Then my uncle would say, 'Canny Mr. Fenwick never comes to see me now. No man careth for my soul.' He continued he had never been so happy as when he was a Christian man. One day in his room I read Wesley's hymn on 'The believer's hope beyond the grave.' He stopped me and said, 'I can't stand that.' 'I can hold out if my brain keeps strong enough.' I have always felt that these kind friends did not continue their visits. Had they done so I am firmly convinced my dearest friend on earth would have finished his course with the light of a Christian hope. At this time I was thrown into the company of a fine young man, John Lamb, and was persuaded to sign the pledge in the year 1857. This proved my salvation from the drinking which took place in the forge. Two years later a more eventful change passed over me. I had long been inclined to decide for Christ, but the factory life was my hindrance. I said,

'No one can be a Christian in the ironworks.'

It was my privilege to hear the famous Wesleyan minister, Rev. Charles Hawlings, who preached a most powerful sermon from the words, 'I have called, and ye refused.' I was utterly apest. I went home, fell on my knees, and prayed earnestly for God to forgive and save me. But soon the impression passed away, and was only renewed by a great revival in Brunswick Place chapel, conducted by Dr. and Mrs. Palmer, of America. I went forward to the Communion with many others. I found I had got the real thing this time. I sang that night with all my heart as I have often sung since,

'O happy day that fixed my choice
On Jesus, my Saviour and my God.'

And now I am in my jubilee year.

In those youthful days I often wondered what it was to have a mother. I had none. I felt like Topsy, as if I had grown. My companions had bright, glad homes and sweet, loving mothers. This often made me sad and lonely. If I had only a mother to love me like other lads, how happy I should be. Everybody seemed to have a mother but me. No! not every one. There was one, at least, like myself—Hugh Gilmore. He had no home, no mother. This common experi-

The Motherhood of the Church.

CROWDED together in a corner of the greatest city the world ever saw were thousands of men, women, and children. They lived in dwellings so small and mean that the stabling of horses in many parts of the land was palatial when compared to it. In a majority of cases, the living, sleeping, cooking, washing, and playing, were all done in the same room. When sickness came the nerves of the sufferer, tortured by such surroundings, made physical pain an agony indescribable, and death a welcome messenger of release. There was no room for the dead, until the day of burial came, but with the living. The light of heaven could scarcely enter these miserable hovels. Those who lived in them seldom, if ever, gazed upon the green fields. Many of them had never plucked a wild flower, or heard the blackbird sing. They called this place by the sacred name of "Home," and forgot that Home means a nursery for happy children, a haven of rest for tired toilers, and a sanctuary for aged parents.

When work grew scarce thousands of these people—who habitually live below the poverty mark—were immediately plunged in a state bordering on despair. The men wore their boots off their feet in their weary search for work. They grew sullen and sour. The iron had entered their soul. The ordeal of the day was not to be turned roughly away when a polite request for employment was made, but to face a starving wife and family of half-naked and hunger-bitten children, and to repeat the doleful tale of non-success after a day of weary seeking for something to do.

Thousands of these people turned to the representatives of Christ in their sorrow and perplexity, feeling sure that those who spoke of the Fatherhood of God would believe also in the Motherhood of the Church. The world was heartless, cold and unsympathetic, surely the Church would be tender, patient and kind. They were not disappointed. Their hungry children were fed; their naked were clothed; their sick were nourished and nursed; the aged were kept out of the dreaded workhouse; their homes were held together in the hope of brighter days. Best of all, many of them learned that God was calling them, through the discipline of poverty and pain, to seek His face and live, and hundreds of them heard and answered to the voice.

To those who, by gifts of love, both great and small, made it possible for the Church to be a Mother to the poor, it will one day be said: "I was hungry and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me. Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My brethren ye did it unto Me."

CONTRIBUTIONS to the CHRISTMAS DINNER FUND of the SOUTH EAST LONDON MISSION, are urgently needed, and will be gratefully received by the Superintendent—

Rev. JOSEPH JOHNSON, Old Kent Road, London, S.E.

ence of misfortune made us chums, and a bond of love and sympathy sprang up between us that only death could break. I must rapidly pass over many events of interest to later years of manhood. One day I saw in the 'Daily Chronicle' the following:—

'Would the surviving children of the late John Jellie, Ironfounder, Newcastle (deceased about 30 years ago) please communicate with Thomas Reid, King Street, Glasgow.'

I at once made enquiry of Mr. Reid what this notice meant, and to my great surprise he sent me a letter stating that my mother was in Belvedere fever hospital, and if I wished to see her I must go at once. I had given her up for dead the last twenty years, and I could hardly realise that she was in the land of the living. I made all my arrangements, and took the first train to Glasgow. I sent a wire to Gilmour to meet me in Preston Station. When the train drew up at Preston my comrade was standing on the platform. I hailed him with uplifted voice, 'Gilmour, I have found my mother, and I am going on to Glasgow to see her.' His face beamed with joy, 'Oh man, I would like to go with you,' he said, 'Glasgow is a dear old city to me.' I arrived at my destination, and made arrangements to visit the hospital the next day. Mother was not ill of fever, but of bronchitis of a severe form.

The next day, with Mr. Reid I waited on the doctor, who received me with great kindness, but also with much caution. He was not disposed at first to believe my story. He said the interview must be very quiet, and the news must be conveyed gradually, or he saw nothing but harm. So he went to have a talk with my mother alone, asking her many questions about her life and children. When the doctor came back he said, 'I think you have made a mistake, sir. The old lady said she had no children. They were all dead and she had buried them long ago.' This statement was evidently made to mislead the doctor. So Mr. Reid said, 'Let me go in and see her, doctor.' He went into the ward and said, 'Now, Anty, how are you to-day?' She replied she was much better, and then she made enquiry how he knew she was in the hospital? 'I suppose you have just had the doctor in seeing you,' said Mr. Reid. 'Yes,' she said, 'the doctor has been asking a lot of impudent questions about things he has nothing to do with. He wants to send the parish authorities after my babies, so I told him they were all dead.' 'But,' said Mr. Reid, 'they are not dead, Anty,

Your Son has come from England to see you.'

She became visibly excited, and did not know what to say. She was not disposed to believe the tale. 'Here is the portrait of your son,' said Mr. Reid. She looked at it, and then said, 'That's na my lad.' But said Mr. Reid, 'Your son is in the next room, will you not see him?' She said, 'No, not in this place, for I have just told the doctor a big lie—Gude Gude! I munna see him here.' She felt greatly condemned—'It was na the intent of my heart to tell a lie. I will not deny my own flesh and blood. Gude forgive me! But don't let me see him in this place, or what will the doctor say to me?' Yielding at last, I was sent for. I held out my hand and turning to Mr. Reid, said, 'Is this my mother?' 'Mother!' I said, 'I am so glad to see you,' and she replied very gently, 'I am glad to see you.' Then for the first time in my life I knew what it was to have a kiss from a mother. Though she was filled with emotion she never shed a tear. Then she entered fully into past events, and I found she had come to England twenty-eight years ago to see us, but had failed to find us. I held up my portrait before her and said, 'Don't you think it is a good portrait, mother?' She quietly replied, 'No, it is na bonnie enough for you.' That authority was at once accepted, as there has always been a small vein of vanity in my nature.

The Doctor had gone to dinner, and the Chaplain came in and who should this be but my dear old friend, the Rev Ebenezer Hall. The Doctor at once told the story to Mr. Hall, and with keen and silent interest Mr. Hall listened to the tale without at once showing any knowledge of the parties interested. When dinner was over, Mr. Hall rushed off to the ward, and had an interview with my mother. The next day Mr. Hall found me out, and our meeting was nearly as exciting as when I first saw my mother. By this time my sister had arrived from Glasgow, and was introduced to her mother.

My sister knew my mother at once, as if she had only seen her yesterday. We spent a few happy days together talking over the events of the last forty years. I set out with my sister and Mr. Hall to view the sights of the great city, and the first place we visited was Brown Street, and I found the miserable hovel of a home down a damp, dark cellar, where I had almost perished. Next we visited the old haunts of Gilmour's early days, 'Paddy's Market,' 'The Giggie Theatre,' 'The Streets and Playground.' They had an unvarying interest to me.

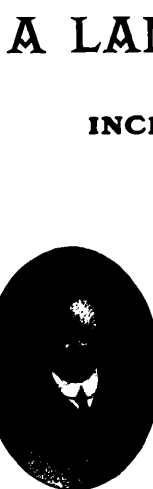
I arranged for mother to go home with me, but the restraints of an English home she could not endure, and she at last drifted back to the wild, hard freedom of Glasgow. She seemed unable to break with the past, and a short time after she passed away from life, and at her grave stood one solitary mourner—that was her only son. The sadness of that home is burnt on my brain.

'When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.'

Surely the Lord hath taken me up!

'The Motor Maid.' By C. N. and A. M. Williamson. Hodder and Stoughton. London. 6s.

This novel is brilliantly written, entertaining from beginning to end, and clean as the snows of Lebanon. The 'Motor Maid' and Jack the Chauffeur are fine characters, and fluently drawn. The vulgar rich, with their snobbery and selfishness, are treated with no sparing hand. The secret of the book is carefully concealed until the very end. Mystery enshrouds the 'Maid' and 'Jack' until the veil is lifted, and they appear as the true lady and gentleman of the story. It is not a book to make tears flow and the blood to curdle, but the writers wield the enchanter's wand all the way through. For motorists and travellers it is full of interest and information, while for all who revel in a good love story, it is a friend who cannot be left until his tale has been heard to the 'finis.' For young and old of both sexes, there is much to charm, entertain, and instruct. None who read it will regret having done so. It will leave a longing for more diet of the same quality.—B. W. K.



REV. C. MOORE.

its extreme wickedness. At that time brutal sports, such as bull-baiting, bear-baiting, dog-fighting, cock-fighting, and wrestling, were the only attractions of the neighbourhood, and it was under these conditions our fathers set about missioning the village. The missionaries were looked upon with a good deal of suspicion, and had to encounter stout opposition. Consequently it is not a matter of surprise that the early history of Primitive Methodism in this place was chequered and slow. Sunday was not very distinguishable from other days, and someone who wished to caricature the labours of the 'Primitives' and the habit and customs of the inhabitants on that day gratified his desire by expressing it in the following poetic strain:

'Ranting, roving, mopping, stoning,
Selling white sand on a Sunday morning,
Up you bill I dare not go,
If I do they'll call me Ranter.'

Until the year 1859 the services were chiefly held in cottages except for a brief period when a fustian cutting room over a public house was rented; however this small expenditure was too much for the society, and the forms which the men had made were sold by the landlord in lieu of rent. It was during the year mentioned above that Primitive Methodism established itself firmly in the village. A small day school was rented for Sundays, and a Sunday school commenced. Its origin and history shall now be told.



THE LATE MR. J. WHITEHEAD.

It came into existence simply and almost spontaneously. No thought-out scheme preceded its inception. No elaborate preparation hailed its birth. The late Mr. John Whitehead, who with his wife and family were connected with Boardman Street Society, Oldham, removed to Ryton in 1857. He soon realised that the distance was too far for his wife and children to go to Boardman Street, consequently the mother and children attended the services conducted by our people in Ryton. Emulating M. A. Whitehead's example quite a number of mothers began to take their children with them to the services, and it was the presence of these little folk that suggested the necessity of starting a Sunday school. The need sank deep into the heart of Mr. Whitehead's wife, for one Sunday night after he had returned from a preaching to him, 'John, if I were like you and Robert Lees, and Samuel Taylor, and Thomas Standing, I would start a school for those children.' This expression of opinion was timely, and destined soon to bear fruit. These men at once took counsel together and recognised the claims of the children.

The very next time one of the travelling preachers came—and they did not come often—they acquainted him with their intention, which he warmly commended, and in a short time a Sunday school was held regularly every Sabbath. The travelling preacher referred to was Dr. W. Antliff. Mr. Whitehead became the first superintendent.

The question of equipping and maintaining the school was in those days no small item. Books were needed, and Bibles and hymnbooks were not the only requisites. Even if they had been it needed money to purchase them. At that time the Sunday school assumed all the aspects of a week-day school, and the scholars were taught the rudiments of an elementary education. Some of the old scholars who to-day are occupying responsible business positions have assured the writer that their sole education was received there. The school opened at nine o'clock on a Sunday morning, and teaching continued till nearly twelve. It was customary for the children to go in

A LANCASHIRE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

INCIDENTS IN A FIFTY YEARS' CAREER.

By Rev. C. Moore.

LANCASHIRE, so well known as the county of cotton mills, is equally well known as the county of Sunday Schools. It is here where people of thirty, forty, and fifty years of age are still scholars. Indeed for many years it has had such a hold upon the Lancashire folk that they invariably speak of the church as 'the school.' The brief story that is to be told in this article sufficiently illustrates the influence of such an organisation in the moral and religious life of the community.

Seventy years ago the village of Rotton—now a town with a population of 16,500—was notorious for its extreme wickedness.

At that time brutal sports, such as bull-baiting, bear-baiting, dog-fighting, cock-fighting, and wrestling, were the only attractions of the neighbourhood, and it was under these conditions our fathers set about missioning the village. The missionaries were looked upon with a good deal of suspicion, and had to encounter stout opposition. Consequently it is not a matter of surprise that the early history of Primitive Methodism in this place was chequered and slow. Sunday was not very distinguishable from other days, and someone who wished to caricature the labours of the 'Primitives' and the habit and customs of the inhabitants on that day gratified his desire by expressing it in the following poetic strain:

'Ranting, roving, mopping, stoning,
Selling white sand on a Sunday morning,
Up you bill I dare not go,
If I do they'll call me Ranter.'

Until the year 1859 the services were chiefly held in cottages except for a brief period when a fustian cutting room over a public house was rented; however this small expenditure was too much for the society, and the forms which the men had made were sold by the landlord in lieu of rent. It was during the year mentioned above that Primitive Methodism established itself firmly in the village. A small day school was rented for Sundays, and a Sunday school commenced. Its origin and history shall now be told.

It came into existence simply and almost spontaneously. No thought-out scheme preceded its inception. No elaborate preparation hailed its birth. The late Mr. John Whitehead, who with his wife and family were connected with Boardman Street Society, Oldham, removed to Ryton in 1857. He soon realised that the distance was too far for his wife and children to go to Boardman Street, consequently the mother and children attended the services conducted by our people in Ryton. Emulating M. A. Whitehead's example quite a number of mothers began to take their children with them to the services, and it was the presence of these little folk that suggested the necessity of starting a Sunday school. The need sank deep into the heart of Mr. Whitehead's wife, for one Sunday night after he had returned from a preaching to him, 'John, if I were like you and Robert Lees, and Samuel Taylor, and Thomas Standing, I would start a school for those children.' This expression of opinion was timely, and destined soon to bear fruit. These men at once took counsel together and recognised the claims of the children.

The very next time one of the travelling preachers came—and they did not come often—they acquainted him with their intention, which he warmly commended, and in a short time a Sunday school was held regularly every Sabbath. The travelling preacher referred to was Dr. W. Antliff. Mr. Whitehead became the first superintendent.

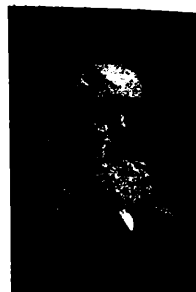
The question of equipping and maintaining the school was in those days no small item. Books were needed, and Bibles and hymnbooks were not the only requisites. Even if they had been it needed money to purchase them. At that time the Sunday school assumed all the aspects of a week-day school, and the scholars were taught the rudiments of an elementary education. Some of the old scholars who to-day are occupying responsible business positions have assured the writer that their sole education was received there. The school opened at nine o'clock on a Sunday morning, and teaching continued till nearly twelve. It was customary for the children to go in

their clogs and shawls, afternoon being the time when they appeared in their Sunday best. To purchase the requisites already referred to, a number of teachers and young folk went round Christmas singing. The Coopers, of Downey House, who were amongst the most influential people in the village, always gave ten shillings to the first party of singers who visited them after the midnight of Christmas Eve. Having quietly assembled in front of Mr. Cooper's residence, punctually as the clock pealed out the hour of midnight, the band of 'Primitives' began to sing the favourite Lancashire Christmas hymn, 'Christians, awake, salute the happy morn', and forthwith the ten shillings was handed to them.

The doctrine of economy had also to be practised. The school had to be kept clean, but the society could not afford to pay for it. However, a number of young women came to the rescue, and gratuitously offered their services, and took it in turns of two every Saturday to clean it. They took the greatest pleasure in this work, and regarded it as one of their highest joys to perform this menial labour. The following incident told to the writer by the person whom it concerned reveals the resourcefulness of the young women. On the day of the Sunday school anniversary the girls and young women were accustomed to 'sit up,' and be dressed in white. Before the day arrived it was ascertained that one young woman, called Sney Platt, could not afford to have a white dress. The rest determined she should not be left out, neither should she be allowed to disgrace them by being dressed in 'colours,' therefore they borrowed her a white skirt and blouse. But alas! when the latter garment was fitted on it would not meet at the back by several inches. How could this difficulty be overcome? For it was the custom to march on to the platform and turn their backs to the audience, whilst they bowed their heads in prayer, and it was felt that this custom could not be departed from. Happily they overcame the situation by all of them wearing little shawls over their shoulders, which were discarded after the prayer referred to.

The commencing of the school proved to be the turning point in the history of Primitive Methodism in Rotton, and the work flourished so much that in a few years the question arose, 'Has not the time arrived that we should build a church and school?' Everybody agreed that it had. A further question presented itself to the minds of the workers—'Where and how can we secure a site of land on which to build?' Religious bodies—especially Nonconformists—all over the country have often had to ask this question. Rotton largely belongs to one or two land owners, and it was to be feared that they would not be over favourably disposed to wards Methodism.

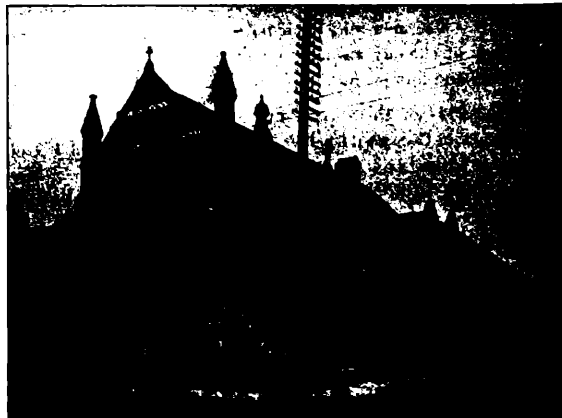
However, our fathers were not to be daunted in their de-



MR. J. ETHERINGTON.



THE LATE MRS. MARGARET PENNINGTON.



BOTTON CHURCH AND SCHOOL.

sire to erect a place of worship, for we find that a deputation was appointed to interview Sir Percival Boscawen, Bart., with a view to the leasing of a piece of land, but without success.

Repeated attempts were made through Sir Percival's steward, which were all futile. It was then deemed advisable to adopt another course, which proved successful. A plot of ground had been leased to a building club, upon part of which four cottages had been erected, but the rest was leased to Mr. J. Thorp, who further leased it to us for the object already mentioned. In 1867, in the presence of a large concourse of people, the foundation stone was laid. The building consisted of two storeys, the lower one being the school, and the upper one the church. For thirty-five years these premises were destined to be the scene of many struggles and untold sacrifices, of great joy and remarkable success.



THE LATE MR. J. PENNINGTON.

services. The methods and experiences of Mr. R. Ashworth, who was the choir-master for a time, are both amusing and interesting. He had very little knowledge of music, and his vocal powers were far from reliable. How then could he teach the choir? This is how he managed it. He could play a flute, and he got some of his friends to sing the tunes to him whilst he played them on his instrument; subsequently taking his flute with him to the practice, the choir had to learn them from him as he played the tunes over to them.

Perhaps the man who rendered the greatest service to this church was the late Mr. John Pennington. His mother was a lay preacher of much eloquence, and more than once preached in the old school. She was also intimately acquainted with Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, and when they were in the neighbourhood of Oldham they made their home with her. The name of Mr. Pennington is to-day likeointment poured forth. He was one of a number of rare souls that Primitive Methodism has produced. He was the embodiment of enthusiasm and inspiration; always active in the work, he must have often similarly engaged. He could not tolerate idleness and luke-warmness. He was equally as sacrificing as active, and to him it did not seem mean inconvenience, but was what it is. Living in Oldham he had between one and two miles to come, and it was his custom to bring his tea on a Sunday and often his dinner as well. Between the services he would visit the absentee scholars, also the members of his class meeting, indeed anyone belonging to the church. Only a few days ago the writer was told by a local preacher that he owed his position to Mr. Pennington, who constantly visited him after his conversion, and gave him words of counsel. His son, Joseph, has been the Sunday school secretary twenty-two years, which office he has filled with considerable ability, whilst his younger son, Albert, is a teacher and the organist of the church, which position he discharges with remarkable efficiency. At the quarterly lovefeasts, which were held in the chapel over the school, it is said when the congregation became excited, and indulged in clapping their hands, and stamping their feet, Mr. Pennington would spring to his feet and call out, 'Now friends, no stamping, no stamping, you will knock the plaster off the ceiling.'

The minutes of the teachers' meetings of years ago are not without interest. The following resolution occurs repeatedly, 'That we pass the teachers roll but ask them to mend.' July 6th, 1874. 'That John Smith teach on trial for a month.' Aug. 2nd, of the same year, 'That John Smith be a full teacher.' Mr. Smith is still a teacher, choir-master, and local preacher. The following minute shows the progress of the school, Dec. 1875: 'That we report 136 scholars and 23 teachers.' The next savours of an old-time quarterly meeting—'That we have prayer every half-hour and that the chairman be time-keeper.' The Sunday school anniversary was extremely popular and attracted the people from far

and near. It was noted for its instrumental music as well as for its singing. The only complaint that the congregation made was that the platform to accommodate the singers and instrumentalists took up too much of the space of the small chapel. The present church and school were built in 1897-8 and cost over £3,000, including a fine pipeorgan which was installed three years ago. The opening sermon of the school was preached by Professor A. S. Peake, M.A., D.D. The school will accommodate 450 scholars, and is thoroughly up to date in its construction and arrangement. Associated with it is a flourishing Endeavour, healthy Band of Hope, and Young Men's Institute with sixty-one members. The superintendents are Messrs. John Etherington and Robert Smith, and the treasurer is Mr. E. Stott.

The jubilee of the school was celebrated on October 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of this year, and proved a great success. A procession of 300 scholars and teachers was made through

the town on the Saturday, and over 320 sat down to tea. An enthusiastic meeting was held in the evening. Rev. T. H. Huot, who travelled in its circuit nearly fifty years ago, was the preacher for the week-end. Sunday was a red-letter day. Although it rained in torrents all the day, three memorable services were held, and at night the ohnron was more than crowded. The Monday night's meeting was especially attractive and will not soon be forgotten. A new silk banner, costing £23, was presented to the school by five children representing the fourth generation of families connected with the school. A short history of the school has also been written. This Sunday school in the heart of busy Lancashire, equipped with a teaching staff of forty, is doing a splendid work for Christ and Primitive Methodism, and the recent jubilee coming at such an opportune time has not only filled hearts with gratitude but inspired them for future toil.

THE STRAIT GATE.

BY C. E. DOE.

'Strive to enter in at the strait gate!' The words, spoken in ringing accents by the man in the pulpit, beat with rhythmic insistence upon the sick brain of the man in the pew. The strait gate—the strait gate. Strive to enter in at the strait gate!

They were nearly of an age, these men, both young, and with something of a chance resemblance in form and features, something of the same suggestion of mental possibilities and power. Only, the face of the man in the pulpit was aglow just now with the light of a great enthusiasm, the passion of a sure conviction; while that of the man in the pew was haggard with want, hardened by shame and sin, and shadowed by the darkness of a great despair. Nevertheless he leaned breathlessly forward as the closing words of that strong, impassioned appeal, with its message of hope and trust in a higher Power, fell upon his ears. Then a hymn was sung, and a prayer offered, and the audience began to disperse. But a few remained behind—the customary few—and the man in the pew sat on. For the storm still raged without—the pitiless storm from which he had sought this opportune shelter an hour or more before—and faint and foot-sore as he was, he had nowhere to go. But to the hymns and prayers that followed, he paid but little heed. All his faculties, deadened and numbed as they were by past misdeeds and present physical exhaustion, seemed concentrated upon the preacher's message, and the strange new possibilities and yearnings which it had awakened within him. Presently the inevitable happened. A man approached him—one of those well-meaning men who habitually regard a stranger, and particularly so ragged and unkempt a stranger as was this, as a Prayer Meeting's lawful prey. Approached him with the best of all intentions, to attempt that most delicate and difficult of tasks, and the one which without the direct promptings of the Holy Spirit Himself—the seal of the Divine Commission—must surely be the most flagrant of all sacrileges—the intrusion of a stranger into the Holy of Holies of a human soul. But at the first unexpected question the outcast started, turning a half bewildered, half indignant gaze upon the intruder, while at the second, shaking off the detaining hand with a muttered exclamation, he rose hurriedly to his feet and passed from the warm and lighted building into the storm and the darkness without.

It wanted but two clear days to Christmas, and the raging wind and driving snow had rendered the streets practically deserted at this particular hour. But backward and forward in the bitter storm he paced, aimlessly enough, yet mechanically returning again and again in the same direction—that of the little chapel with its gleaming lights. He was approaching it for, perhaps, the twentieth time, when he stumbled against a figure at the street corner, and raising his eyes from the slush of the pavement, encountered those of the preacher, whose words still echoed and re-echoed in his ears. A muttered apology, a swift mutual glance of recognition, a moment's hesitation upon both sides. Then he of the pew spoke out:—

'I was in your church this evening, and I heard you preach,' he said. 'Honestly, now, is there anything in it all?' An abrupt question, abruptly worded, yet spoken with a passion of intensity which his companion was quick to recognise. And the voice that asked it was unmistakably the voice of a gentleman. There was a moment's silence, then the minister made reply. 'There is everything in it,' he said. He would have added more, for the other had turned, and, still half mechanically, was walking beside him—only that the renewed fury of the storm rendered all save the most fragmentary conversation impossible. But at his own gate he turned to his companion once again. 'Come in,' he said, 'we will finish our talk over a cup of coffee.' The invitation, so simply proffered, was irresistible, and the man who had tasted nothing that day, obeyed. The minister drew a latch-key from his pocket, and, opening the door, led the way into a room—small, and by no means luxuriously furnished, but warm and cheerful, with a fire burning brightly in the open grate, and the table laid for the evening meal. And, pacing backward and forward upon the rug, a woman, young and graceful, singing a soft, sweet lullaby to the infant in her arms. A simple enough picture, surely, yet one which in its every suggestion of home and happiness, somehow brought the starving man to the outcast's eyes. The young wife turned toward the door at her husband's entrance, the lamp-light gleaming on her pretty golden hair, and her face aglow with love and welcome. Then her eyes fell upon the stranger—ragged, unkempt, forlorn—a bit of human wreckage from out the storm. But she showed no token of surprise. For this woman possessed that rarest and sweetest of all womanly gifts—the fact that is the outcome of all true sympathy. She laid the now sleeping infant in its cradle, and advanced to greet the stranger, whom her husband had already drawn to the fireside. 'It is a terrible night,' he was saying; 'we are both of us half frozen, but a cup of hot coffee will soon set

us to rights.' But a minute or so later he had followed her into the kitchen. 'There's that old coat of mine,' he began, half apologetically, 'and those boots. I couldn't wear them much longer, anyhow, and the man is soaked through.' Then his eyes followed the direction of hers, and he smiled. For coat and boots were already warming by the kitchen fire.

A few minutes later and the outcast, considerably improved in appearance by this addition to his wardrobe, was eating a substantial meal by a glowing fire. And yet a little later still, and his kind y hostess had slipped from the room, leaving the two men together. And ere at her husband's summons she rejoined them once more, another soul—tremblingly, graspingly, falteringly, but still bravely—had entered in at the strait gate.

The storm still raged without, seemingly with redoubled fury, when the stranger rose to go. To go; but where? It was the woman who asked the question, practically enough, but only to elicit by slow and painful degrees, that it was unanswerable. The man was merely passing through the town 'oo tramp,' and, destitute and penniless as he was, knew of no place of shelter. Involuntarily she glanced toward her husband, and again their eyes met. Then she turned to the stranger.

'You cannot possibly continue your journey in such weather as this,' she said gently. 'While as for lodgings—it is far too late to seek them now, especially as it is Sunday night. We must make you up a bed here.'

For a moment he looked at her, as though doubtful if he had heard her aright. Then he shook his head, the while a great wave of crimson surged up to his very brow.

'No, no!' he said hoarsely. 'Not that! You are kind and good, but you don't understand. You don't know all. I have not slept in a decent bed, or even house, for years. For the last five months I have tramped up and down the country, herding with the lowest and vilest. And before that—his voice faltered for a moment, then the words came out hurriedly and desperately, 'before that, I served for five years as a common convict, and slept in a prison cell.'

'And before that?' Again it was the woman who asked the question, quietly and calmly, as one who already knows the answer. He stopped in his passionate protest then, and drew a quick, deep breath. 'Before that, I was a gentleman—so called,' he said at last, slowly. 'Yes,' she said gently, 'and now, by God's help, you are going to redeem the name.'

So the stranger stayed until morning, when, after a substantial breakfast, he bade farewell to his kindly friends. His plans were very simple—o tramp his way to the nearest seaport, where he had heard that work might be obtained, and from thence if possible to eventually procure a berth upon some outward bound ship, that he might begin life afresh in one of the Colonies.

The minister would have given him money, but he steadily refused. And so they parted, having met but as 'ships that pass in the night,' but passing 'speak to each other.'

But scarcely had he reached the garden gate when he heard the voice of his hostess calling him back. And turning, he saw her standing there bareheaded in the bitter cold.

'To-morrow will be Christmas Eve,' she said hurriedly. 'And you—you won't refuse a little present in honour of Christmas time!'

It was but the tiniest of parcels that she slipped into his hand, and it contained but two bright half-crowns. Yet the outcast raised it to his lips more than once as he stumbled on his way in the snow and slush, half-blinded by his own tears.

Ten years later a man and a woman were making their homeward way through the busy streets of a certain Midland town. Afternoon was already merging into evening, and the brightly lighted shops were thronged with purchasers, intent upon Christmas cheer. For the morrow would be Christmas Eve, and signs of the festive season were in evidence upon every hand. But it was scarcely of Christmas joys that either of these two were thinking just then. For truth to tell it had not been a particularly cheering afternoon to either of them. For the funeral from which they were returning, and at which the one had been officiating, had been that of the best financial helper and friend that the little church of which he was minister, had possessed. And things in general seemed to be wearing a very gloomy and depressing aspect just now, with a strike dragging out its weary length in the great cotton mills in which most of the members of that same little church laboured, and with a winter that threatened to be of unusual severity, looming darkly before so many hearts and homes.

Yes, save for the sake of their own innocently expectant little ones, to dream of Christmas festivities in the presence of so much privation and suffering would have seemed almost



MR. JOSEPH PENNINGTON.



MR. E. STOTT.



MR. R. SMITH.

a sin, to these two, whose hearts were so big, and whose means so small.

But the children! Insensibly the weary lines upon the minister's brow softened, and the love light leapt back once more into the eyes of the wife and mother, displacing the look of anxious care as the familiar house with its lighted windows came in sight.

'Sarah will have given them their tea, poor mites!' she said. 'I told her not to wait if we were not back by five. What a comfort it is that Sarah is so very trustworthy!'

'They had reached the threshold of the little dwelling now, and they paused a moment as the sound of childish voices fell upon their ears. 'They are disrobing Father Christmas, and their stockings—bless them!' the mother whispered. 'One thing, it doesn't take much to make children happy. A very few pence, and a lot of love, will go a long way towards filling those little stockings, thank God. If it were otherwise, I think that it would break my heart.'

A moment later and they had entered the room, and were gazing in considerable astonishment at the scene before them. For tea was by no means over, but appeared to be in full progress, presided over by Sarah, the faithful though somewhat diminutive 'maid of all work,' whose honest, homely face seemed at present to be one broad smile. And seated opposite to her, in the minister's own especial chair, eating bread and jam, and drinking weak tea, with the greatest apparent satisfaction, while the children laughed and prattled upon either side, and the baby, of whom he had mysteriously possessed himself, cooed rapturously upon his knee, was an entire stranger—a gentleman, well-dressed and handsome. A chorus of eager explanations greeted the appearance of the two familiar figures.

'It's a gentleman from over the sea to see father,' explained ten-year-old Marjorie.

'He's come thousands and thousands of miles on purpose, and he said that there was nothing in all the world that he would like so much as to be asked to tea,' supplemented a smaller brother in a would-be aside.

'I do believe that it's Father Christmas himself,' whispered the smallest child but one, as he clung to the hand of the father whose place in his childish heart not even the patron saint of Christmas-tide himself, with all his manifold charities, would ever have had power to fill.

'He's going to bring me a big rocking horse,' the eager voice went on; 'and Baby is to have—' But the stranger had already risen to his feet, and putting the baby into its mother's outstretched arms, held out his hand in greeting. 'You don't know me,' he said a little wistfully. 'But I should have known you both again had we met upon the opposite side of the globe. For when a man has carried a likeness, or likenesses, in his heart for ten long years, it would be strange if he did not recognise the originals at a glance. Yes, it is just ten years since we met—ten years ago, this very night, then—a penniless, homeless outcast—by God's help and yours, I entered in at the Strait Gate.'

The children had hushed their eager voices, and were standing with awed faces, not unattended with disappointment. For surely this man who spoke so solemnly and slowly was an altogether different being from the jovial 'Father Christmas' of a few moments since. But a sudden glad light came upon their father's eyes, a light born of something more than mere recognition.

'I have written to you more than once, since then,' the stranger resumed, but thanks to the trick that you Methodist ministers have of moving from place to place, the letters never found you. But now—' He turned and laid his hand upon the head of the eldest child, and the smiling came back into all the eager little faces at the words that followed. 'Since this is my first Christmas in England for all these years, these little folks and I are going to make it a very happy one by your leave.' Then he turned once more to the mother standing there with her baby in her arms, much as she had stood upon that memorable night of long ago; and again his voice softened.

'Ten years ago you made me a present,' he said slowly. 'Made it in honour of the Christ-child whose birthday, then, as now, we were about to celebrate. I am a rich man now, but I have known what it is to face poverty, hunger, and want many times since that day. I have slept in common lodging houses, and swept the snow from the streets for a crust of bread. But I have not present with me still, and please God, I shall never part with it.'

His tears were falling fast—tears that were not of sorrow. 'It was so little—so very little that we were able to do,' she said at last.

'Little!' he echoed quickly. 'Ah, well, perhaps it was but little, as the world's arithmetic goes. It was just the message that the Christ-child came to bring—*God was*.'

'Devotional Hours with the Bible.' By J. R. Miller, D.D. Hodder and Stoughton. 2s.

THIS is Dr. Miller's second volume of Devotional Hours, and takes the reader forward from the Crossing of the Red Sea to the close of David's life. Dr. Miller is a captivating writer, especially to those who desire to get aside from the world's rush and had rest in a quiet place. Those who follow Dr. Miller through his series of chapters as he goes through the Old Testament will in the end have a greatly-enriched mind. The chief features and incidents of the Scriptures are always noted, and wise lessons deduced therefrom. The book is very refreshing reading.

'Aspects of the Spiritual.' By J. Brerley. James Clarke and Co. 3s. 6d. net.

THINK is very little in this vast and complex life that comes to us. 'J. B.' Whatever the phenomena our author can greet the outlook with a cheer and force the new or old conditions to yield their best and utmost. The book is rightly named 'Aspects of the Spiritual,' for 'J. B.' has the spiritual eye that detects the spiritual side of life's varying phases. Whatever he touches he turns it into golden thought. It is impossible for this essayist to be tame and commonplace. He takes the commonplace and transfigures it. Take the chapters on 'Open-Air Religion,' 'Our Past,' 'Growth,' 'The Day and Tomorrow,' and see how true this is. The machinery of 'J. B.' intellect takes in the raw materials of all cults and transforms them into the living bread of faith. Scholarly, breezy, optimistic, and broad these essays are among the best toon the modern religious mind can take.

SOME REMINISCENCES OF A SKY PILOT.

WHEN a man has had more than a third of a century in our ministry, if his eyes and ears have been open he has seen and heard many things both grave and gay, pathetic and tragic, fantastic and funny. The items here set down are mainly of the latter kind. The fearful and tragic things one could tell are not for Christmas numbers.

Just before leaving one's first circuit, where nearly three years had been spent, an elderly local preacher, who had listened to several scores of my attempts at preaching, said at the close of a Camp meeting, 'Why, then, thou' preached a sermon at last, I wondered whether thou ever would.' Whether it was meant for comfort or correction he, no doubt, knew, I did not. Preaching at a village on the same Station one Monday night the congregation seemed tempted to convulsive laughter through the whole of the service. Hymns, lesson, and sermon alike excited their risible faculties. The preacher was much perplexed. The society steward let out the secret on the way to the railway station. A good local brother who had heard the sermon in town on the Sunday morning had appropriated it and given these villagers it in the evening, and had afforded me no notice of having forestalled me.

A similar perplexity overtook me in Leeds about the same time. Taking a Sunday's work there, I had to preach in the afternoon, where a venerable Supernumerary was taking duty morning and evening. Observing a broad smile on the face of the congregation during the early portion of the service, I beckoned the superintendent of the school to the pulpit, and asked him the subject of the morning's discourse. 'Abraham and Isaac,' said he. Sure enough that was the intended theme for the afternoon. Hymns and lesson pointed that way. But what made the situation still more amusing, the previous Sunday had brought these people a sermon on 'Abraham and Isaac.' The prospect of a third within the week was more than their gravity could bear. A quick change had to be made, much to the preacher's discomfort. Sunday evening prayer meetings yield preachers much food for reflection. Having spoken for at least fifty minutes one Sunday night, and at a somewhat rapid rate, a good soul asked Heaven's blessing upon 'the few broken remarks.' 'Broken' they no doubt were, but they were certainly not 'few.'

On the more domestic side of a minister's work amusing incidents occur which have also their sober and, sometimes, painful aspects. Whether we have power to refuse to officiate at inopportune and unwise marriages is not now under discussion. But marriages at which there was no case for either Registrar or minister, and cases where the bridegroom has had to turn to the bride for money for the marriage fees, have come under one's notice. One Christmas day morning a couple, a widower and a widow, presented themselves at me prior to enter double harness again. My heart was not so light as theirs. They had each seven children! The union was not happy. Nothing but a long series of miracles could have made it so.

The mothers of England bring their little ones to be baptised, and this duty of our life is not without its humorous happenings. Asking one of these mothers for the date of her child's birth she said she 'was not quite sure, but thought it was the thirty-third of August.' Another said, 'I do not know what day of the month it was, but it was Christmas day.' Education has yet much to do. About the 'little ones.' Preaching one Sunday morning near Christmas on 'Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end,' I was stating that the number of His possible subjects was increasing, as people were coming in to the world in larger numbers than they were leaving it, when lo, the chapel door opened, and eight women with four babies entered—a very striking and timely corroboration!

It is not far in thought, however far in years, from the 'little child' to the old man. Among the sweetest satisfactions of life has been the privilege of witnessing the efforts of Old Age Pioneers upon many of our aged sailors. Gently tears have vanished from their minds, and the dread of going 'over the hill to the porchouse' has been effectually laid. Dear old souls, what a load have they lost! When the pauper disqualification is removed, many more, equally deserving as the present recipients, will enter the good land of a more comfortable old age. One of the King's pensioners whom I was once accompanied early in the year by the clergyman of the parish, and asked about the pension. The old man replied, 'The pension's all right, sir; I've gotten it. I'm like you now. I'm maintained by Government!'

Pastoral work among the sick is not without its veins of exquisite humour. A loyal member of our church left town for the country, where she sickened and died. Knowing that the end was not far distant, she made all needful arrangements for her funeral. The grave was selected, bearers chosen, and the village clergyman was informed by her that his services would not be required. All this was done many weeks before she died. When I called to see her one day, although weak and racked with pain, she said, 'The clergyman does not mean to be done out of his job, he called a day or two since, and read the Resurrection chapter over me.' She was mightily amused, and laughed most heartily. An old man, long bedridden and longer very deaf, was visited by a very high Church cleric—more Romanist than most. The aged invalid had attended our chapel for many years. He had heard much of the Romish ways of the vicar, and when the latter reminded him that he had not seen him at church, the old man replied, 'I never went to second-hand shops in my life.' Whereupon the imitator of Rome, unplanned, went his way, and returned no more.

In one of my circuits we built a mission church and commenced operations therein with a twelve days' mission, in which scores of people, and many of the worst of characters, were converted. We wound up with a great tea meeting and thanksgiving service. Many working men could not get to the tea. Among them was a rough man who had been soundly converted during the mission. He prayed in the prayer meeting that night, and high tides of grace and glory were experienced. In his prayer he said, 'We could not get to the great ham tea, but my Lord, what a grand supper we're having.' Conventionalities go by the board in such meetings as that.

One of the pleasantest recollections of a minister's life arises from the universal kindness meted out to us by all classes of our people. The labourer, the artisan, the shopkeeper, the merchant, the squire, and the M.P. make us welcome to their best. When I was a little lad preachers were wont to share the hospitality of our village home. It was only a labourer's cottage. But such fare as it could offer was ungrudgingly given to the Lord's messengers. Often since then, when far-riaged and motor cars, and being entertained in princely fashion, I have thought what a grand investment my father and mother made for me when, at great sacrifice, they thus made their lowly home into a Pilgrim's Inn. 'Herein is that saying true, One soweth and another reapeth.' The reaper's joy has been, and is, mine in a very large degree.

A Christmas Carol.

'Twas silent night, and o'er their flocks
The shepherds watch were keeping;
Above the steady stars burn bright,
Below the sheep were sleeping.

When sudden burst a radiance rare
The veil of heaven rending,
And angels hung on hovering wing
An added light were lending.

The startled shepherds bowed in awe;
The awakened sheep were bleating;
But sweetly rang in cheering strain
The angels' gladsome greeting.

God's will to man is only good,
And peace he is bestowing;
All glory to His gracious Name,
For thus forgiveness showing.

Lo! yonder in the slumbering town
The Light of Life is rising,
A mother now her new-born Babe
With glowing pride is prizing.

He is the saving Son of God,
The pledge of love unfailing;
Crushed are the haughty lords of sin,
And ceased is sorrow's wailing.

Still rage the brazen hosts of hell,
Strife still the world is swaying;
And sorrow yet weeps wearily,
In heavy anguish praying.

But evil's strength is of despair,
Its shaken walls are falling;
The song of hope is sounding clear,
And joy to woe is calling.

Little Heaton, Lancs. JAN. A. GARTELL.

'The High Calling.' By Rev. J. H. Jowett, M.A. Methuen. 3s. 6d. In these meditations on Paul's Epistle to the Philippians Mr. Jowett opens out the deeper springs of Spiritual life. And no one can do this more effectively than the famous Carr's Lane preacher. 'I have tried,' says Mr. Jowett, 'by diverting the Epistle of its ancient phraseology and giving it modern expression to bring its comfort and inspiration to some who are walking the pilgrim way in our own time.' If the reader will bring to this volume 'the quiet eye' he will detect unusual openings out of the word. The chapter on 'The Cure for Carr' is one of the great messages our rushing age needs. The book is full of Mr. Jowett's best expository gifts.

'The Fascinated Child.' Edited by Basil Mathews, B.A. Jarrold and Sons. 2s. 6d. net.

THE publication of this charming book is another token of the modern attitude towards the child. Of the child of a by-gone generation it might truly be said, 'He came to his own but his own received him not.' The child is coming out of the shadows into the bright light of noon. The editor is a Sunday school worker and one who thoroughly understands the child. The opening chapters of the book, contributed by the editor, are the most valuable part of the volume. Mr. Mathews has the child instinct and his chapters on The Cherub Imp and The Wondrous Hero are simply fascinating. The succeeding chapters—Talks to boys and girls—are an expression of the principles clearly stated by the editor. The talks are all good and are so constructed that a child will not be able to give up the book until every page is read. The whole volume presents the new method of approaching and winning the child for the Lord Jesus. The book might have been termed Child Psychology Illustrated.

'The New Socialism: An Imperial Inquiry.' By Jane T. Stoddart. Hodder and Stoughton. 3s. net.

BOOKS claiming to be impartial are often suspected of being one-sided and extremely partial. But, on the whole, this book is what it claims to be, and that is saying a great deal in these days of hot discussion, and party prejudice. Socialism is rarely given impartial justice either from friend or foe. It is most often extravagantly eulogised, or scathingly denounced. Miss Stoddart has succeeded admirably in holding the balance even and in conducting her inquiry in a truly scientific spirit. It is true that her inquiry sometimes issues into trenchant criticism, but it is always fair if trenchant. The author is not a Socialist. She manifests a sympathetic interest in Socialism, but her deepest interest is in Social Reform. The book is extremely valuable—indeed, at present indispensable, for a knowledge of present-day Socialism. Miss Stoddart has made a wide study of the Socialistic Literature, not simply of England, but of France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, as well as America and Australia, and her method is to let the great masters of Socialistic thought and principle tell what Socialism now is. We commend her method, and her work is an impressive and convincing presentation of the principles and problems and hopes of 'The New Socialism.'—D. T. M.

WOMAN'S WORLD AT CHRISTMAS.

If there is one time in the year when woman feels important it is at Christmas. The thrifty mother has been 'putting by' a little week by week until a goodly pile of coins stands waiting for loving investment in gifts of grace to young and old. The frugal cottage mother has her little store of fruit and sugar, and small coin to be expended on good Christmas cheer to the robust delight of her lusty sons and daughters. The aged are waiting with eyes made eager by long association with Christmas generosity, waiting always for the love and kindness for which their infirmity pleads. Happy prosperous women are bustling and dimpling with suppressed pleasure at the joy of giving joy to others not so fortunate as themselves.

Our reputation is at stake. Wee to the housewife whose reasonable puddings do not turn out toothsome and good now, if her cakes are not 'light as air,' if the 'good old English beef' is not tender and succulent, so that benevolent fathers quote Dickens, and, with expanded chests, dispense kindly wishes and pin-money to admiring families. But no such wee at tends the well-ordered home. By careful attention to details 'success is assured,' and our cookies will be the wonder of the table. The standing dishes will of course be on our tables, the beef, the turkey, the goose, the plum cake, mince pie, and the trifle, which, by the way, is often not a trifle at all in the matter of expense, but a few other dishes will form a pleasant variety.

Velvet Cream

is a dainty dish, taken from a P.M. Cookery Book:—

6 sheets gelatine	1 breakfast cup cream
½ lemon juice	little milk
½ tea cup sugar	

Soak gelatine in a teacupful of water for an hour by side of the fire; when dissolved, add sugar and lemon juice. Melt, but do not allow to get too hot. Put the cream in a bowl and whisk until it stiffens. Add a little milk (about two tablepoons) or a little more if the cream seems to be turning to butter. When stiff, add gelatine, etc., slowing stirring. It is then ready to be poured into moulds.

Bridlington Cheese Cakes

are very good indeed. Put a layer of jam in shell of good short paste. Mix: 2 oz. butter (in cream), 2 oz. castor sugar, one egg, 2 oz. ground rice, place over jam and bake.

To make Butter Cream

for Jam Sandwiches or 'Jordan Cakes.' Put sufficient (equal) butter and sugar into a basin, beat until a nice creamy consistency, spread over top of cake, decorate with (shelled) walnuts, or pieces of Cherry Angelica, or stiff jelly. This is a great improvement to a plain Sponge Cake.

A Pretty Apricot Dish.

Make a mixture as for Jam Sandwich, bake in a deep cake tin, after it is cold, place in a glass dish, with a cutter take out the middle, open a tin of Apricots, gently pour over the cake enough syrup to moisten, place prettily on the cake slices of Apricot, adorn with whipped cream in the centre. This is a favourite dish and quite digestive.

An Appetising Apple Dish.

Cook 2 lbs. apples to a pulp, beat, lay in glass dish, sprinkle crumbly Sponge Cake quite over, make a custard, pour gently over, adorn with whipped cream or white of egg sweetened slightly and beaten to a froth arrange over, drop tiny pieces of cherry or slices of stiff bright jelly over the froth. This is both wholesome and attractive.

Pretty Jellies.

Use one of Hartley's quart jellies, dissolve according to directions. When about half cold, drop in slowly Hartley's Golden Plums (in syrup), not too many of them, however, as they are rather heavy, or some whole raspberries (in syrup), or strawberries, or some 'quarter's' of oranges previously stewed in sugar. The effect when the mould is nicely turned out in a glass dish is very pretty. The whole 'science' of the dish lies in choosing the proper time in which to drop the fruit. Just as the jelly begins to 'jell' (à la M. Alcob).

A pretty compliment to pay our guests is to put a flower of harmonious colour with that of our table decorations by the side of each 'Cover,' or just in front of each plate. If a dainty Xmas card with a motto, or a 'riddle,' or a sentiment is attached, many an uncomfortable pause will be filled up, and good talk started.

It is wise in decorating our tables to remember that people cannot converse very well across a thicket of ferns and flowers, covering nearly all the middle space of the table. Not many women see the value of flat table ornaments, such as lengths of smilax or delicate fern leaves laid in some design from end to end, crossed in the middle, finished with a bright bow of ribbon, but this, with dainty vases of flowers is very chaste and 'chic.'

We are sorry that the pretty Japanese serviettes are in disfavour with so many housewives; they give a pretty touch to a festive table, which can hardly be said of damask. They are easily placed, and incur no trouble for the laundress. Anyway, they may be used without compunction for children's parties, 'At Homes,' and for casual callers.

It is a good thing to give our party some name which shall be quite distinctive. Dickens' Book, Picture Post Card Celebrities, are all old favourites, and are hard to beat. The great gain lies in the fact that there is commonality of idea in the minds of all which will save the hostess from that fearful sense of desolation when her guests seem to be suffering from *cere*, 'Something to do,' is the secret of success in entertaining adults as well as children.

Could anything be more woful than the experience of Charlotte Brontë and W. M. Thackeray, when they sat in the same room with others and could think of nothing to say! The poor little novelist found herself aching with self-conscious misery, every moment seemed to shrink her person and lay her mind under a spell, while the giant Thackeray at last, finding it unbearable rushed from the room, and in the hall as he hastily got into his great coat, told his daughter he could not stand it another minute. If two such clever people could feel and act in such a curious way, we must not expect our 'evenings' to pass successfully without some sensible provision against such a catastrophe.

Amongst all the new games charades easily hold their own. The fun of dressing up appeals to all, and canoes peals of merry laughter. Amongst the good words to illustrate are Boycott, Peabody, Handicap, Fish-wife, Hermion, Lawful, Washing-cap, Handmaid, Horsemanship, Cupboard Bo. kman, etc., there is no need to describe, as these will readily suggest the 'get-up.'

A good geographical game is to illustrate names of places by signs, these placed either on a table, or in different parts of the room (which induces people to move about). For instance, the Hook of Holland is represented by a book hanging to a piece of linen, the Red Sea by a large letter C painted red. The same could suggest the Black Sea with the colour changed to suit. An orange with the inside taken cleanly out would suggest the town of Peel, while a fish hanging behind a tiny toy fireguard points to the name Fishguard, and so on to any extent. Clever young people will soon be able to multiply these to any necessary extent. Of course the greatest number of correct guesses will win the prize, if such is offered, and as this would be for zeal, ingenuity, or quickness, no objection could be made.

And now may I wish all the best joys to come to every woman in our church.

May the happy re-unions of dear ones gathered from many distant places have in them no sorrow, no bitterness; but in every home may love abide, crowned and enthroned. If memory is wistful and calls up a vision of other faces 'loved long since, and lost awhile,' let it be tender and solemn if you will, but not despairing, for there is the thinnest veil between what we in our ignorance call the 'other world' and this. And there is no reason why our fancy should not give our invisible loved ones their place in the circle, and lend imagination wing as she seeks to re-instate those who are gone. They are, like ourselves, 'in His keeping.' A very happy Christmas to you all.—E. J. D.

THE BABE IN THE HOME.

By Emily Jones-Davies.

At Christmas our eyes turn to the children; it is their festive season; the child sits enthroned; we older people are more adjuncts for their pleasure, their guardians, ministering to their wants, and then suggesting more to them, and if they become a little exacting under the unwonted indulgence, it is small wonder. We are always sorry for childless people at Christmas, and we strongly advise those who have none of their own to borrow from their neighbours, and give a good time to the lonely, for at no time of year is loneliness so acute as at the festive Yuletide. Dickens has sketched, almost created for us, the merry, hearty, kindly, but often pathetic Christmas family party, with its laughter and fun, its homely wit and broad genial humour, and the deep under-notes of human emotion. His Tiny Tim lives as truly in the hearts of English people as any child of flesh and blood; and what

mother has not cared her own child more tenderly for having met Tiny Tim.

But the home which has a baby in it is more blessed than all. The wee monarch, whose 'right there is none to dispute,' holds high level, and his admirers pay him worshipful homage. His first Christmas is made so luxurious that Grandmother declares it will be his last; his cry brings adoring Aunties to his feet, and fluffy curls are freely given him to bury his dimpled hands in; costly rings are recklessly risked in those same little fists, and lips are appealingly offered to him, which *Somebody* would give a 'king's ransom' to him. King Baby, indeed! no king ever had such slavish devotion, and when, surfeited with attention, he closes wondering eyes with dainty lids and sinks into a slumber, which is itself a poem, with plump body at rest and muscles all relaxed, his pink limbs thrown into such an exquisite pose, which only Nature can teach, his soft curls clinging about his now quiet face, all the household treads softly, and voices are lowered in tender consideration of his claims. Oh, that Baby, how it claims our protection! What possibilities of heroism for his dear sake we are conscious of! The irresponsible girl has gone, and in her place a mother, mild and strong; the frivolous young husband has become the head of a family, and mark how he speaks of 'my boy' in a way which makes people look again to see the significance.

Some learned bachelor (I think Macaulay) said he could not see why people should be so proud of parenthood, it was common enough! Common! why every child is a 'thought of God' to good men and women, a wonder, a miracle, a trust, 'God thought about you and so I am here,' as MacDonald says in his exquisite poem, and so the helpless little one is protected and loved with a love most like the All Father's of any human love. But the babe will not always be helpless and pliable; wrapped up in that lovely form is a will which will work for weal or woe, and it is ours to guide, and control, and teach, until the plaything shall become a noble personality, a force for righteousness.

What are the child's surroundings? I do not mean his extensive nursery arrangements; every child should have care and food and fresh air and good habits, all as simple as possible, and without fussiness, but what 'atmosphere' has he around him? We cannot be too careful of this. Children seemed to take good or evil influences through their skin, so subtle are they. Said a man to me not long ago, 'My parents never talked religion to us very much, but they lived it.' The fruits of that life are seen to day in sturdy character, noble ideals and faithful service. Are we feeding him aright, good thoughts, good principles, right views of life and death. We must not shrink from or shrink the doing of our own work here. No mother can afford to give this over to Sunday school teacher or pastor, however good, but must patiently teach the young conscience that it may be a worthy censor when the time comes for decision.

The babe in the home has had a new meaning since the advent of the Holy Babe in Bethlehem, and in every child we see afresh the face of Him who became a child; for His sake, as well as their own, children are sacred and beloved. Let us ever keep this in mind, and the babe shall become to us the most precious ministry by his demands upon us, increasing our power to do, by his purity cleansing our thoughts and acts, by His trust leading us to trust our Father. Except ye become as little children ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

London Women's Missionary Society, Forest Hill Branch.

On behalf of the above society a drawing room meeting was held on Wednesday afternoon, November 17th, through the kindness of Mrs. Emmott, Acacia Road, West Dulwich. Mrs. F. Cooper presided in the absence of the President, Mrs. G. Shrubhall. An address was given by the Rev. J. Pickett, ex-President of Conference, who spoke of the need of women's work on the foreign field, and gave examples from his own experience while in Africa. The audience was favoured with solos from Mrs. Bailey, and recitations from Miss Doris Cooper. Collection £3 11s. 3d.

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'THE CONQUEST OF CRASTER.'

BY REV. M. T. PICKERING.

CRASTER! But where is Craster? It is a picturesque fishing village on the Northumbrian coast, mid-way between Amble and Sea Houses, and lies close to the ruined castle of Dunstanburgh. Craster is an old-world, romantic spot, calm and beautiful as we saw it on a bright summer's day, but wild and stern when in mid-winter's storms the angry North Sea beats upon its rugged, rocky shore. Sitting by me is a friend who was at the beginning of Primitive Methodism there, and while he tells the story I will write it down so that those who are interested may read. It is truly a wondrous story my friend tells, and one hitherto unrecorded.

Some forty years ago the religious provision for the village was most meagre, consisting of an occasional service by a clergyman in the village school, and a chance visit by the sea-coast missionary. Some of the village-folk, concerned lest they should starve their souls, occasionally travelled some two or three miles to an Established Church service. A man of some note in the village in those days was Matthew Stephenson, tall, well-built, alert of mind, and of most cheerful disposition, patient and pushful in pursuing his calling. Matthew Stephenson was specially noted for his love of song. It was really this love of song that created the circumstances which led to Primitive Methodism entering Craster. About 1869 or 1870, in one of his visits to the Tyne in the pursuit of his herring fishing, Matthew Stephenson became associated with a number of religious people, and, to his great delight, learnt from them many hymns then being introduced from America. He revelled in these songs of Zion, and on returning home used his Sunday afternoons in teaching his own children to sing these hymns. They soon had a considerable audience gathered outside consisting mainly of the other children of the village. The audience were invited to enter the home, and speedily the new choir grew to considerable dimensions. The fathers and mothers, hearing of the charm and power of these singing meetings, came too, and Sunday by Sunday Matthew Stephenson's two capacious rooms were full, the children singing in the one room, and the parents listening in the other to the hymns of praise.

One Sunday, when the children had gone home, and a few parents remained, one, William by name, suggested it was



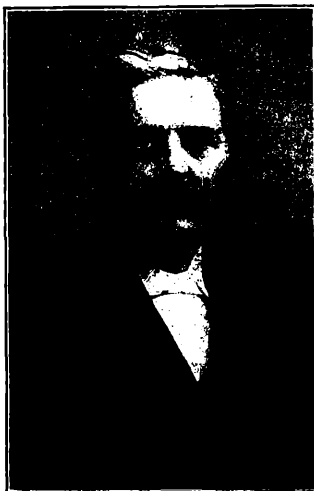
REV. W. A. FRENCH.

time they moved on another stage, and did something more than sing. This was a development for which the leader was not prepared, and to which he felt unequal, so he replied, 'Why what more William does thou want to have done? I think we are not doing so badly.' Well, what means, was William's response, 'is, we should have some prayer as well as singing.' These were spiritual heights to which Matthew Stephenson had not yet risen, so he covered himself by saying, 'Why, William, if thou thinks so, it can be done. Then shalt do the praying, and I will do the singing.' That was an arrow maybe shot at a venture, but good was in it and good came from it. The Holy Spirit had been in the song, and He was wooing them on to a new life and unknown spiritual experience. These sturdy men, sons of the sea, had thought but little, or at least only occasionally, of the deep things of the heart, but now springtime was upon them, the springtime of the soul.

Another stage in their spiritual development was speedily reached. As the result of a conference amongst the fishermen it was decided that the Gospel must be preached as well as sung, and the end of their deliberations was seen in a young fisherman being deputed to request the junior Primitive Methodist minister residing at North Sunderland, to come and preach to them. The Rev. W. A. French was the young minister of that day. In reply to the enquiry, 'What church has sent you?' the answer was, 'We have no church; the fishermen want you to come and preach the Gospel to them.' This was a request, be it remembered, from a body of men, not one of whom had a clear or decided spiritual experience. Happily, however, some of them were at the portals of the Kingdom. 'When do you want me?' enquired the preacher. 'Oh, I have to take you back with me,' replied the messenger. What urgency of soul! Surely there was here the glimmerings of that fuller light which was to break upon and flood their souls. When men are thirsting for God naught can tear them away. Next day the preacher walked the ten miles of rough coast line to preach to such eager, earnest listeners. The week following, a mission was conducted, and each night, to a crowded house, the evangel was declared. Into a late hour the worship continued for the people would not depart. We write it down with joy, that then for the first time many believed unto salvation. It was a new era for Craster.

The next quarterly meeting was held at Lowick, and to that meeting there came a request from Matthew Stephenson, on behalf of the people of Craster, that their village should be put on the plan and supplied with regular preaching services, giving at the same time twenty-six names of persons who formed the membership of this infant church. Amongst the first names are some of interest and value beyond Craster, as Matthew Stephenson, William Archbold, Joseph Archbold,

Robert Smailes, and others. For some ten years land could not be secured; but at last, in the wondrous ways of Providence, a site was secured, and God has there richly owned the faithful labours of this little church. The pioneer, Matthew Stephenson, will never die out of the thought and life of Craster. William Archbold will ever be remembered for his consistent life and many generous acts. Endowed above others with material possessions he gave freely to his church.



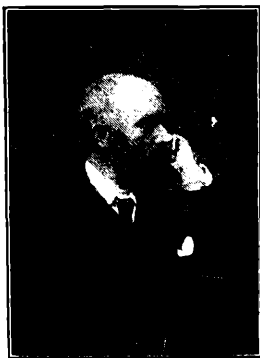
REV. H. YOOLL.

We really owe the little church at Craster to William Archbold, for it was he who tactfully overcame great difficulties in securing a site, and assisted generously in building this village Bethel.

When the new House of God was opened it was fitting that the Revs. W. A. French and H. Yooll were present. Mr. French had much to do with the spiritual birth and early nurture of this village church. The Rev. H. Yooll was also for several years associated with Craster, and did much for its moral and spiritual advancement. In North, North-East, and North West Northumberland, Henry Yooll did a great work, and to-day is loved and revered by all. It was a great joy to us in the summer of 1908 to speak at a Centenary meeting in Craster, and with the wondrous past rising before us we thanked God and took courage. The Holy Spirit reaches the soul of man by many avenues. At Craster by the ways of song he came to those rough toilers in the deep. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit.'

'GLORY' JOHNSON.

By C. C. McColvin.



MR. C. C. MCCOLVIN.

stone built, not large but comfortable, and at the rear, separated from the house by a backyard, stood his blacksmith's shop. His chief interests centred around this shop, house, and the chapel. He was not a cultured man, as that term is now understood. His reading did not include many subjects, but his knowledge was deeper than we knew. In early life he had been a member of a band of poachers, which, by its skillful daring, had become the terror of the whole district. So notorious had this band become that a determined effort was made by the authorities to apprehend the members of it, and in an affray near a lonely public house on the moor, they vainly made their attempt. Some were fatally wounded, but Johnson, with many strange thoughts, got home safely. He began to read the New Testament, and discovered what a poor, ignorant trespasser he was. The Law of God was fearfully exacting; all his struggles brought no comfort, and the proud

man was fain to confess that he was a poor, pitiful sinner. 'What the Law could not do,' Well, it means Jesus did. Oh, Glory! And so he found grace.

For years Johnson had been his own master, bought his own iron, manufactured his wares with his own hands, solicited and executed his own orders; and few better judges of the finished product could be found. By his thrift he had accumulated a modest competence, so that the spartan rules of his earlier life were somewhat relaxed. If, however, he thought it necessary, the stern regimen of fasting was applied, so that he might understand in some small measure what He felt who 'did it all.' His leisure was spent in reading the Bible and such other books as were available, and attending the chapel. Neither of these ought to be called recreations, for 'necessity was laid upon him.' He read the one and attended the other diligently, but he had his own point of view. If the sermon pleased him, the preacher knew it; if it did not, a look of pained surprise would rest on his face.

It was a Christmastide long ago, and his thoughts were naturally turned to the great event that was being commemorated. When the afternoon service in the chapel was over his restraint gave way, and he told us the things that mattered to him. 'How strange it is that the Gospel is not understood. What we heard to day was not Gospel. The Gospel is good news, and if it isn't good news it isn't Gospel. The law couldn't help Johnson for he could not keep it, but Christ was the end of the law, the end of it.' And a smile, good to look upon, illumined his countenance. Then he took out his Testament and read, 'For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband.' You see the law is dead; so Johnson is free, Hallelujah! It is not doing, you can do nothing, cannot keep a law of God. Even if you succeed outwardly, the heart is like a cage of unclean birds. No, no, it's no use; but Jesus made an end of it. He did every bit of it, if anything was left for Johnson to do it would be spoilt.' He emptied his pocket for a poor lad, and a friend said a penny would do as well. 'Not for me, how can I help doing when He did so much for me.' 'You say doing is no good.' 'Not to get salvation, no; but because of it, not to get it; but because it has come. Oh, Hallelujah.' And so the great heart of him was jubilant. A new spirit was infused into his labour, work was invested with a fresh significance. It was no longer drudgery, but the willing service of a grateful heart.

When he led the class meeting it was good to be there. As he gave out the hymn, 'Here I'll raise my Ebenezer,' we all felt the depth of his gratitude. 'Jesus sought me when a stranger,' He did it; it was just like Him. 'Oh to grace how great a debtor'; this to him was the great deep, incomprehensible and wonderful. 'Praise to leave Thee,' Lord help us, and 'Make us very humble.' The hymn formed the basis of his class meeting exhortations and his lines were recited for the benefit of the confident and self-sufficient. There was one seat in the chapel that was specially Johnson's; there he dreamed and worshipped and wept. None would dare sit there if the tall form of Johnson was seen coming up the aisle. Sorrow invaded his home. Death claimed two sons and a daughter, as well as his wife. Still his life was not unmitigated, for 'He did it all.' Much of the harshness dropped away. The mellowing discipline of experience made him tender, so that when he prayed 'Lord bless all these canny little barns, especially their mothers,' one felt that whatever his idiosyncracies his heart was right. His scorn for the flippant and irreverent was apparent as he asked the Lord to be merciful to poor ignorant sinners, 'dandy sinners, Lord.' If he was reproached for any little neglect he would say, 'Very likely, Johnson makes a poor job of what he has to do.' While others spoke with confident assurance, he was content to say, 'He knew no other than that he was going to Heaven.' And so, as the years passed, the shrewd business man was always the contrite sinner, and the stern exterior concealed a very tender heart.

He went about the village with a certain aloofness, but when the snow was on the ground many lonely homes were brightened by unexpected benefactions from unknown sources.

To be reminded about his good deeds was as a 'red rag to a bull.' 'What,' he would cry, 'has Johnson not pride enough, and in a whisper, 'do you think he wants to bribe Almighty God.' This is from the devil, he wants to make me believe I'm doing something grand, to swell my Head. Lord! help me.' And at the Tuesday night class meeting, a new emphasis, a clearer meaning was in the words as he sang,

'On to grace how great a debtor,
Daily I'm constrained to be,
and his voice had the tone of anguish as he cried,
'Let thy goodness like a fetter,
Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee.'

The regimen for his soul was rigorous, but it gave him the heart of a little child. He had his limitations, he knew a strong man's doubt, but he had also discovered a strong man's rest. He was sure of Jesus. His delight in Psalm 23, and the story of the good shepherd was perennial and abiding. 'How wonderful to give his life for the sheep, but it was just like him,' and as he went forth with dimmed eyes men knew not what he saw.

He had few intimate friends, for he did not court popularity. He lived not for the applauding thunder at his heels that men call fame, but some choice spirits knew his worth and loved him. A helpful neighbour calling one night to see whether her services were required, looked into the window and saw Johnson sitting in front of the fire. The departing sun glanced on his white curly hair, causing it to shine like an aureole. Above the fire-place was an almanac, on which was printed a coloured picture of the Good Shepherd. The New Testament was open on his knee, smiles and tears transfiguring his face into radiance, while he repeated, 'I give My life for the sheep.' 'Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.' 'Canny Jesus, Johnson is safe.' And so his evening held the prophecy of the morning. For more than eighty years he had toiled and worshipped, filling an unique place in the life of the village, and when he was called higher some felt that the village would never be quite the same again. Those who were privileged to look on the familiar features as they reposed in their last sleep, observed that the face was younger looking than expected. The shadow of a smile hovered round the lips, and the eyebrows were slightly raised, as they had been seen scores of times, when some new and tender thought came to his mind.

GUILD OF KIND HEARTS

A CHRISTMAS LETTER. By Rev. Arthur Jubb.

MY DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS.

I am delighted that once more we are 'all alive oh !' and able to wish one another a merry Christmas. I hope that you will all have a very happy time. The little folks will be looking forward to the mysterious visit of good old Santa Claus, and I expect you'll be shouting up the chimney to tell him what you want him to bring. And you'll be sure to borrow father's stocking to hang up at the bed-foot, so that he may fill it with good things. Of course, you won't be greedy, else he might fill your stocking with potatoes or with big cinders.

The bigger boys and girls don't look for Santa Claus, but you expect a present all the same, don't you? Well, I trust you will not be disappointed. But I wonder who is going to give father and mother a present this year? There is an old saying that the cat catches mice for the kittens, but the kittens never catch mice for the cat. But I do know some big boys and girls who contrive to surprise their parents with a present sometimes, and it would be delightful if some who have not done it before would try it this Christmas.

Have you noticed how the Guild grows? Early this summer a girl who was interested in the Guild asked: 'Will Mr. Jubb bring the Guild of Kind Hearts to Grimsby with him?' If you were all here, I think the only thing we could do would be to go on the Cleethorpes sands. No other place would be big enough for us. More than a thousand new members have joined this year, and others are joining every week. Ask your friends to join. Anyone may join who will promise to make Kindness the rule of their life. Persons over sixteen years of age are enrolled as senior members. Some teachers have got all their scholars to join, and the Guild Talk is read in the class every Sunday. All our members are proud of their badges, which cost a penny each. Anybody ordering must also send a stamp for postage. Members who lose their badges can also purchase new ones at any time.

I want to thank all the Guild members who have sent me letters and postcards during the year. I am always glad to receive a message from you, and I have been specially pleased to have letters from some, telling me that they had given themselves to Jesus, and were resolved to love and serve Him. Such news as that is always good news.

May you have a jolly Christmas! On this page you will find some games which will give you glorious fun at your party. While you enjoy yourself and especially if the weather is severe and frosty, don't forget your friends the birds. See they get a few crumbs from the table.

With my best wishes to you all, asking you to think of me this Christmas as I will think of you,

Your Big Brother, ARTHUR JUBB.

Hawarden House, Princes Avenue, Grimsby.

The Gate.

Oh, my steed is white as the day,
Swift as the wind is he,
And I ride him forth in quest of fame,
And my sword clangs merrily.
Forward and back, and to and fro,
And never a halt in his stride—
Oh, ponies come and ponies go,
But a gate is the best to ride!

I rush like a shooting star
To the aid of the wounded knight,

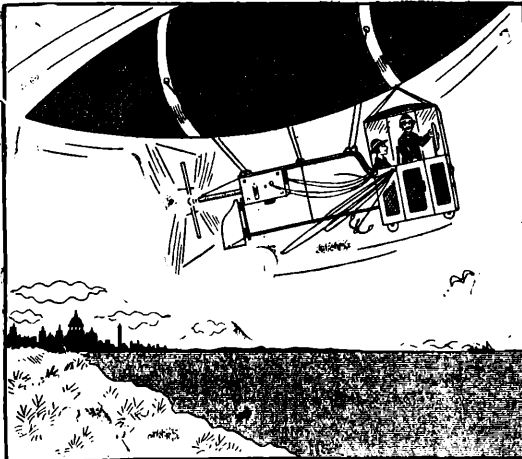
And my hair blows out in the sudden wind,
And my armour gleams all bright.
Forward and back, and to and fro,
And never a halt in his stride—
Oh, ponies come and ponies go,
But a gate is the best to ride!

Christmas Prizes.

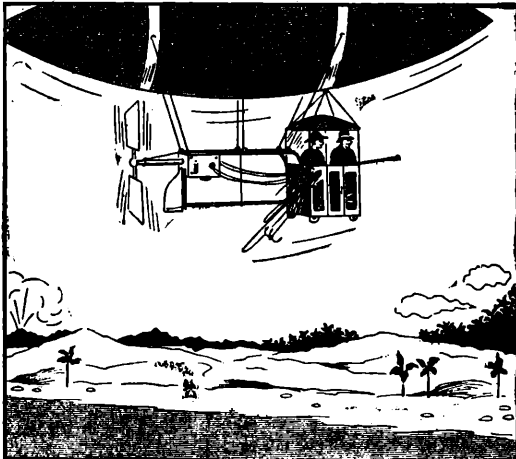
1. For those under eight.

Draw or paint a flower or a bunch of flowers, and send to me. Half-a-crown's worth of books for the best. If two or more are equally good, the books will be divided.

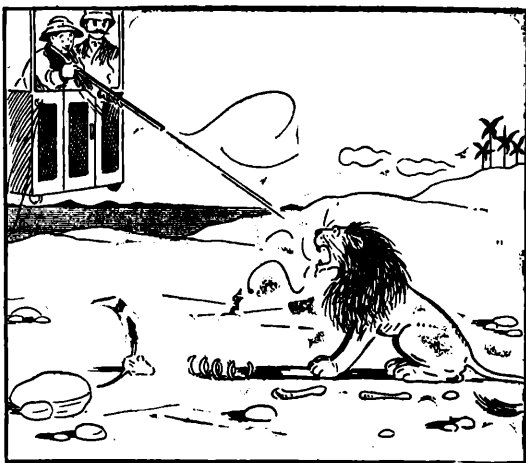
LION-HUNTING IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.



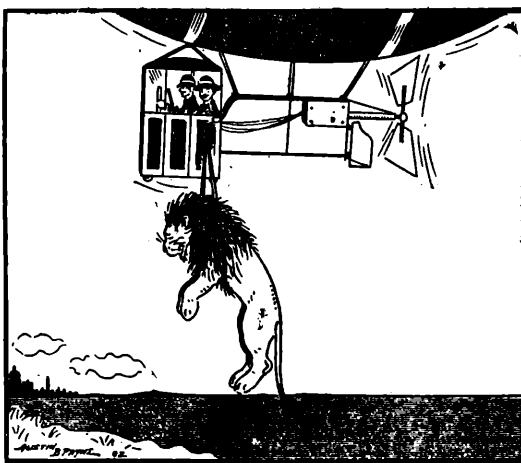
1. LEAVING ENGLAND.



2. ARRIVAL AT AFRICA.



3. A DEAD SHOT.



4. RETURNING HOME.

2. For those between eight and twelve.

Draw a circle, then fill in the centre with a picture—anything you like. You can decorate the outside of the circle, if you wish. A half-crown book for the best picture.

3. For those between twelve and sixteen.

A splendid 5s. 6d. book will be given for the best painting or water-colour.

CONDITIONS: Send in by Saturday, December 16th. Give name, age, and address. The work must be done by the competitor.

Christmas Crackers!

What is the difference between a schoolmaster and an engine driver? *One trains the mind, the other minds the train.*
Why is a dog biting his tail like a good housewife? *Because he makes both ends meet.*
How can it be proved that a horse has six legs? *Because he has forelegs in front and two behind.*
Why is a schoolmistress like the letter C? *Because she forms lassies into classes.*
When is a man thinner than a lath? *When he's a shaving.*
Why are cross children like the Cherubim mentioned in the Bible? *Because they continually do cry.*
Where did Noah strike the first nail in the ark? *On the head.*
What is the colour of a grass plot covered with snow? *Invisible green.*

When is a man like the letter B? *When he is in bed.*
Why is a horse cleverer than a fox? *Because he can run when he is in a trap and a fox can't.*
What is it which if you name it even you break it? *Silence.*

Christmas Games.

Here are three new games which will provide heaps of fun at Xmas parties. They are games at which Japanese boys and girls play.

1. *Game of 'Fox.'* This demands great quickness. To play it make a wide slip noose in the middle of a length of rope. It is well to have the rope made of some soft material. Two players take hold of this rope, one at each end, and hold it as nearly tight as they can without closing the noose. The noose is the trap. A third player sits or kneels half way between the other two, facing the noose. Just opposite him or her, on the other side of the noose, put a cake or an orange in a box or stool if you wish. This cake or orange, or whatever it is, is the prize. The fox's object is to reach through the noose, grab the prize and pull it back through the noose before the two players holding the rope can catch him in the trap. If they catch him he pays a forfeit, if they do not he takes the prize.

2. *Game of 'Nose.'* This has a similar idea in it as 'Simon says.' The leader touches

different parts of his face, but the other players are to follow his orders. All watch the leader, who may order one thing while doing another. The players are apt to follow the motion rather than the commands. For instance, the (girl or boy) at the head tips her nose with her first finger, saying, 'Nose, nose, nose—eye!' at the same time putting her finger to her chin. The others, who must be looking into the leader's face, will find their fingers on their chins too, unless they are alert. They should touch their eyes in obedience to the command 'eye,' or they are liable to a forfeit. Between the mouth, chin, cheek and ears (right and left) eyes, and the nose, a good game can be played.

3. *Another game of 'Nose.'* This is very amusing to children. Make loops of string, one for each player. The loop must fit tightly round behind the ear and over the tip of the nose. If it is well on, the loop should not fall off without considerable effort on the player's part, as only the face muscles can be used. When all the loops are fitted on, a signal is given, and each tries to work of the loop as quickly as possible. Other things being equal, the best face-maker wins.

Tit Bits about Eoya.

Auntie: 'Are you getting on well at school, Tommy?'
Tommy: 'Yes! Auntie.'
Auntie: 'Well, now, if I gave you two biscuits, and then took away one of them, what would that make?'
Tommy: 'It'd make me cry, auntie!'

Johnny Brown got more floggings than he liked to count. So when taken by his mother to choose a pair of knickerbockers, his choice fell on a pair to which a card was attached, stating, 'These can't be beaten.'

'Mary,' complained her mistress, 'these banisters always seem dusty. I was at Mrs. Robinson's to-day, and her's are as bright and smooth as glass.'

But Mary both knew the reason and told it.
'Mrs. Robinson has three small boys, ma'am,' was her convincing answer.

First Boy: 'Your father must be an awful man. Him a shoemaker, and making you wear them old boots.'

Second Boy: 'He's nothing to what your father is. Him a dentist, and your baby only got one tooth.'

FOURTH QUARTERLY REVIEW.

International Lesson for Sunday, December 19th.

G.T., 2 Timothy iv. 7.

By Henry J. Pickett.

I.—The lessons bringing us to the closing scenes of this noblest of men, and chief of Christian workers, cover the early remembered dates, A.D. 57 to A.D. 67. During the whole of this time—excepting the brief respite between the first and second trials in Rome, during which he re-visited some of the scenes of his earlier labours—he is either chained or under guard, his former liberty curtailed for Christ's sake; yet even so, what a full life it is, how crowded with testimony alike by speech, and deed, and pen. Following the chronology we have adopted through all these studies, Paul was a Christian for thirty-four years, and while no part of his public ministry was free from the malice and persecuting opposition of his enemies, for nearly one-third of his Christian life he suffers the shame and pain of imprisonment. What an argument for accepting the Christian faith to find that "rejoicing in tribulation," these ten years are the happiest, the most useful, the most confident and victorious. There can be no other verdict than this. The hand that made this hero, and produced these results, is Divine.

II.—The review, though it deals with a prisoner, is more thrilling than any romance. No biography outside the Bible equals it in striking contrasts, in mastery of circumstances, in actual achievements.

Lessons 1 and 2 (Oct. 3 and 10) show

The Folly of Evil Combinations.

(a) They begin in a trick, and such a foundation must give way. The charges brought against Paul were manufactured. Those who forged them knew they were untrue. And what we see in Acts xx. is not reason, nor righteousness, but despair and panic. What was said about Daniel is equally true of Paul. The only fault against him concerns his loyalty to Jesus. How foolish for anyone to suppose they can overturn the eternal throne.

(b) They mature in hatred of the right. This leads up to the plot of the "more than forty" (Acts xxiii. 12). What they hoped was that Paul would have been killed in the riot (Acts xxiii. 31). Foiled in that hope, they deliberately resolve on his death, because so long as Paul lives, he is a terror to evil-doers.

(c) They end in disaster for those who plot them. The sequel of the story should be briefly told. All the trouble, expense, and suffering, betrayed, as no doubt they were, by one of their number, who told Paul's nephew, ends in the escape of the man they hated. Let the scholars be warned against all wrong-doers, and any plot, however secret and clever, against goodness.

III.—Lesson 4 is in every way a contrast from the secret cowardice and open panic we have just reviewed. Alike in the public court of justice and the private interviews at Caesarea the prisoner is the right kingly man, and his word and deed declares

The True Defence of the Good.

(a) Paul falls back upon the shelter due to surrender to Unmistaken Love, and

(b) Upon the proved experience of God's power, through obedience, to save, sustain, and make victorious. This always works out that worthiness of motive, sweetness of disposition, uprightness of conduct, which cannot be successfully attacked, and produces a humble boldness in which there is no fear. Was not this the secret of Christ's own strength? Does not this explain the boldness of Peter and John before the council? and does it not illustrate Peter's own challenge? "Who is he that will harm you if ye be zealous of that which is good? Luther's fearlessness before the Diet of Worms, Bunyan's confidence before the magistrates, are well-known instances. Cromwell once wrote to one of his officers, "I hear you have lately been a little wary in your conduct; take care, treachery will deceive you, integrity never will." The defence of God and Goodness are never broken.

IV.—Lessons 5, 6, 7, 8, though dealing with a prisoner, a man from the ordinary point of view, to be pitied, reveals great resources, wisdom, and leadership, and suggests

The Indispensable Ministry of Goodness.

Taking the voyage and the disaster of shipwreck, it is easy to see that Paul was worth more to that large list of crew and passengers than ship master, captain, and carter on top together. But for his advice and power to prevail with God, the whole of them must have been drowned. If we turn to his work in Rome, alike in his influence upon the soldiers, the Court, the city, and through his ministry of the pen, it is impossible to tell what the world of that day, and what the world since, owes to Paul. Of the good it is said, *Their works do follow them.*

The world of to-day would be overwhelmed as were the cities of the plain, and the Pompeii of Paul's day, but for the good. Were our Sunday schools and sanctuaries turned into pleasure halls, England's ruin would be certain, spite her fleet and force. Be, up to their measure, every scholar who loves Christ and follows him, preserver others from death. Let not one suppose their influence is so small that it can be dispensed with.

V.—Lessons 10 and 11 (Dec. 5 and 12) fittingly close the year's study of this truly noble life. True, the world offered Paul, as his dying pillow, a block, as it offered its Redeemer a Cross! "Fear not them which have power to kill the body," said Jesus. Spite of the block, and what Rome called a fallure, these lessons reveal

The Generosity and Victory of Goodness.

Paul's self-giving for others, is the practical illustration of his teaching on the offering of our substance for God's work. And both are a striking commentary upon our Lord's words, "He that loath his life shall find it," for Paul's dying utterances are the sweetest music, and the music is full of the triumph of the gospel. We may not covet, we do not stand in any likelihood of the block, yet who of us, looking at Paul's triumphant close, does not say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

KNOWING THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

John x. 7-18; 27-29.

(Joint Meeting with Juniors.)

Endeavour Topic for Week Beginning Dec. 12th.

THE Eastern shepherd naturally furnished the sacred writers with many of their most suggestive images. "On some high moor, across which at night the hyenas howl, when you meet him, sleepless, far-sighted, weather beaten, armed, leaning on his staff, and looking out over his scattered sheep, every one of them on his heart, you understand why the shepherd of Judaea sprang to the front in his people's history; why they gave his name to their king, and made him the symbol of Providence; why Christ took him as the type of self-sacrifice."—G. A. Smith.

We know the Good Shepherd by his voice. "The flocks mixed with each other (by the walls) and we wondered how each shepherd would get his own again. But after the watering and the playing were over, the shepherds one by one went up different sides of the valley, and each called out his peculiar call, and the sheep of each drew out of the crowd to their own shepherd."—G. A. Smith. "There is a story of a Scotch traveller who changed clothes with a Jerusalem shepherd and tried to lead the sheep; but the sheep followed the shepherd's voice and not his clothes."—Expositor's Greek Text. It is partly by His voice that we know Jesus as the Good Shepherd. We recognise the accent of the Eternal Goodness. His teaching cast a spell over his first hearers. "When Jesus ended these words the multitude were astonished at his teaching." Matt. vii. 27. "Why did you not bring him?" asked the chief priests and Pharisees of their officers. "Never man so spake," was their reply. John vii. 45-46. When the ranks of the disciples were thinned by desertion Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." John vi. 68. Jesus is more than Teacher: but the sense that there is no alternative to Him in that respect, has often been the one anchor which has withstood the strain when the current was setting strongly towards the shoals of uncertainty.

We know the Good Shepherd by his care for his flock. Esau's denounces the evil shepherds who feed themselves but do not feed the sheep; who do not tend the sick or seek the lost. The true shepherd will forget himself in his solicitude for his sheep. He will specially care for the weak and helpless, and will count no fatigue too great in his quest for the one which has strayed. It is in Christ's care for the 'lost' that many recognise the Good Shepherd most distinctly. In his relationship to the unprivileged, the outcast, the despised, we see the marks of true goodness. In his apology for loving the lost, Luke xv., He taught men that society's castaways are not outcasts from the Father's heart. Here it is unmistakably true that more is revealed in what Jesus was and did than in what He said. In this respect of caring for the weak of loving the unlovely, first He wrought and then he taught.

We know the Good Shepherd by his sacrifice. "The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." The marks by which we know Him are wound prints. In the life of St. Martin of Tours, it is said that one day when the Salut was praying a radiant person stood before him in his cell. He was robed in royal vestments, a diadem of gold and gems was upon his brow, shoes inlaid with gold were on his feet, and his face shone with joy. "Martin," said his visitor, "dost thou not know whom thou beholdest? I am the Christ." But Martin neither bowed nor spoke. "Martin," why dost thou doubt that thou beholdest Me? I am the Christ." "Not so," replied the saint, "Jesus our Lord never said that He would come again resplendent in purple and gold. I will not believe that I have seen any vision of Christ, except He come clothed upon with the form in which He suffered, and bearing the marks of his cross." Then the devil left Martin. It is even so that we recognize the Good Shepherd. The crown jewels of Christ are a circle of thorns. He overcomes doubt and fear by showing his hands and his side.

We recognize truth, compassion, sacrifice in their highest form in Jesus. These constitute his right to our trust and obedience. Such a shepherd may lead his flock through some gloomy ravine but it is only to bring them to the green pastures and quiet waters of the perfect life.—T. H. CHAMBERLAIN.

A Bicycle for Christmas Present.

MANY persons will be wondering what to buy for their son or daughter as a useful Christmas present. If it can be afforded there is nothing more welcome or durable than a good bicycle. To-day the cycle is part and parcel of our everyday life and is so necessary. The Harris Cycle Co., Ltd., of Hill Cross Works, Coventry, are now making a special feature of supplying bicycles for this purpose, and are quoting a very low price as an inducement to purchase. A postcard sent to this thriving and progressive firm will bring back by return one of the most interesting catalogues giving full particulars. The Harris bicycle can be sent to any address, and arrangements are made for the delivery at the hour it is desired. Of all sensible presents, undoubtedly, the bicycle is among the most useful and gratifying, and the Harris Cycle Co., being among the most enterprising of cycle makers, are able to meet the needs of all our readers.

Driffield

In Kirkburn a very fine addition has been made to the beautiful chapel by the erection of a commodious schoolroom. The opening took place on Thursday last, when Mr. Henry Dixon 'opened' the door. Rev. W. A. Hammond preached in the afternoon, and in the evening Sir Luke White, M.P., presided over an enthusiastic meeting. Addresses were given by Rev. W. A. Hammond and W. Cowdell. Rev. J. T. Tice announced that the new building had cost £250, and nearly three-fourths of the amount had been raised.

The 'Primitive Methodist Leader' may be ordered through any Newsagent or at Railway Bookstalls.

HIGH HONOURS FOR DISCOVERER OF INFALLIBLE CURE FOR RHEUMATISM, GOUT, ETC.

Academy of Science's Gratitude.

EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA'S APPRECIATION OF SCIENTIFIC SKILL.

PAIN INSTANTLY CURED.

HALF-PRICE REDUCTION FOR SUFFERERS.

At the recent Medical Exhibition at the Horticultural Hall, Westminster, was exhibited for the first time in England one of the greatest advances in medical science for many years, viz., an infallible cure for Rheumatism, Gout, Lumbago, Sciatica, etc., and instantaneous pain reliever. English physicians were not slow in showing their unqualified approval of, and warmest interest in, the new discovery, and the hearty recommendations they have extended to it in a comparatively short time demonstrate the great importance and value which medical men here attach to this magnificent remedy. As it supplies the urgent want of a genuine benefactor—in fact, proves "a friend in need"—a splendid reception by the suffering public may be taken for granted.

What Medical Science Achieved.

The grateful thanks of sufferers from Rheumatism, Gout, etc., and of those affected with pain are due to Dr. Scheuble, Ph.D., of Vienna, who has given to suffering humanity the benefit of his genius after long researches in the field of medical science. He has set himself the task of utilizing the most effective elements known to medical science for dissolving and expelling uric acid from the system and for the immediate relief of pain, in such a manner as to free them from their harmful qualities, while yet retaining all their curative properties in a more pronounced degree. This new discovered element is named "Samol." In addition to boasting the above-named qualities, that is to say, the most powerful agencies embodied in a most gentle and refined combination of an ointment, "Samol" possesses also vastly increased penetrating powers, so that the uric acid deposits in the system cannot fail to be reached by this highly absorbable element, whose tremendous dissolving powers play poisonous matter out of the system, and thus equally effecting inflammation.



Dr. SCHEUBLE, the Discoverer of the Infallible Cure for Rheumatism, Gout, etc.

All sufferers from Rheumatism, Gout, Lumbago, Sciatica, etc., may now congratulate themselves upon having at their disposal a means which will enable them to successfully combat one of the most dreaded and refractory elements of the human anatomy. For immediately "Samol" is applied to the painful parts the pain will be relieved, and repeated application will free the system from all poisonous matter which causes such complaints as Rheumatism, Gout, etc.

Important Data for Sufferers.

Latest researches in Medical Science have revealed and established the fact that uric acid plays an important part in heart and brain affections through atherosclerosis (hardening) of the arteries. Though no immediate harm in this respect can befall the sufferer, every effort should nevertheless be made to have the uric acid expelled from the system as speedily as possible, in order to check any aggravation of the evil in time, and thus prevent a chronic condition, which is reflected by premature old age, and evidenced by a short span of life.

Great efforts have been made in trying to rid the blood and system of the uric acid poisons by administering different kinds of medicines internally, but of little avail. It must therefore be a source of great satisfaction to sufferers to know that even those cases which are in the most advanced and refractory stage can now be successfully treated, and that, as a consequence, and thereby anxiety and alarm, can be warded off and longevity attained.

Magnificent Records of the New Discovery.

It is common knowledge that it is exceedingly difficult for new specifics to gain admission to Medical Circles and Hospitals, and the refusal of recognition is in nearly all cases justified on account of the quick nature of such preparations. But in the case of "Samol," the highest distinctions awarded to the discoverer have formed the best and most desirable letters of introduction to the public and the Medical Profession, who extended to it the enthusiastic welcome which it heartily deserves on account of its high approved merits and value.

"Samol" is prescribed in all hospitals in Austria-Hungary and by the leading Medical Professors and Physicians on the Continent.

A Unique Appeal and Challenge. "Samol" is hereby made to all sufferers to verify the remarkable statements made above, and to satisfy themselves of the magnificent curative properties of "Samol" by taking advantage of the following exceptional offer, viz., 1s. 1d. Tube for 7d. post free. We can afford to abide by the issue, as we are confident as to your verdict. In order to bring a trial supply of this marvellous cure within reach of everybody, we have made arrangements for the distribution of a limited number of the 1s. 1d. tubes through the Public Press at the greatly reduced price of 7d. only. Those who wish to avail themselves of this unprecedented offer should apply at once, as it will be withdrawn as soon as the limited supply is exhausted.

"Samol" can be obtained in tubes at 1s. 1d., 2s. 9d., and 4s. 6d. each. The 2s. 9d. tube contains more than three, and the 4s. 6d. tube six times the quantity of a 1s. 1d. tube of "Samol."

Full directions for use in all ailments and emergencies are enclosed with each tube.

For special offer address your application, enclosing sevenpence (postal order for 6d. with penny stamp affixed), to The Selecta Manufacturing Co., 538 Bishopsgate House, Leathes, London.

Services and Preachers.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12th.

BERMONDSEY, ST. GEORGE'S HALL, OLD KENT ROAD, S.E. Rev. Joseph E. Gilbert at 11 and 7; Conn. Edwards at 3.15 (P.S.A.).

BLACKPOOL Chapel Street (facing the Central Pier). Rev. J. Bradbury at 10.45, and Mr. J. Holroyd at 6.30. Thursday, 7.30 to 8.30. **Quiet Hour.** Visitors heartily invited.

CALIFORNIA ROAD N. (corner of Market Road), Mr. E. Slather at 11, and Rev. W. Roberts at 6.30.

CULLERCOATS, at 10.30 and 6.30.

CUSTOM HOUSE, Mr. H. Ellis at 11, and Mr. W. Turner at 6.30.

HARRINGAY, Mattison Road, Rev. J. Pickett at 11 and 6.30.

HARROGATE, Dragon Parade, Rev. W. Younger at 11 and 6.30.

MATLOCK Matlock Bank, Rev. J. Harryman Taylor, M.A., at 10.30 and 6.30.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, Central Church, Rev. T. Sykes at 10.30 and 6.30.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, Maple Street Church, Rev. H. Davenport at 10.30 and 6.30.

SHEFFIELD, Central Mission, Cambridge Street, at 10.45 and 6.30.

SOUTHPORT, Church Street, Rev. J. T. Barkby at 10.30 and 6.30.

SURREY CHAPEL, Central Mission, **BLACKFRIARS ROAD, S.W.** (ten minutes' walk from Ludgate Circus), Rev. J. Toftrees Parr at 11 and 7. Evening's Subject: "Does the Bible Stand." 3.30 (Men's Own), Rev. G. Davies, Curate of St. Lukes.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS, Rev. W. Potter at 11 and 6.30.

Connexional Evangelists' Engagements.

MR. J. B. BAYLIFFE, Hexham, December 11th to 21st.
MISS PERRETT, Fleetwood, December 12th to 19th.

Evangelists' Engagements.

MRS. WILSON, Midsummer Norton, October 10th to December 17th.

MR. ANTHONY DODDS, Skipton, December 11th to 21st.
MR. ALBER SHAKESBY, York (Victoria Bar), Dec. 11th to 15th.

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS.

Organising Secretary's Engagements.

Sunday, December 12th. Rotherham First and Second;
Monday, December 13th. Sheffield (United Meeting);
Tuesday, December 14th. Bromsgrove; **Wednesday, December 15th.** Knighton; **Thursday, December 16th.** Ludlow.

Births, Marriages, Deaths.

NOTICES of Births, Marriages, Deaths. In Memoriam Notices, Thanks Returned, etc., are inserted at the following prepaid rates—30 words and under; each additional 10 words or less 6d. Notices, together with remittances, to be delivered at the **LEADER OFFICE, 75 FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.** by Tuesday morning.

REPORTS of Marriages, Memorials, &c. intended for insertion in the ordinary columns must be accompanied by a prepaid notice of the event at the rates above specified.

DEATHS.

GRAY.—On Nov. 24th, at his residence, Wednesday Market, Beverley, after a short illness, Nathan J. Gray, the beloved husband of Charlotte P. Gray. Aged 53 years. Home, safe Home.

RUSHWORTH.—On Dec. 3rd, at Scarborough, after a long and painful affliction, having borne, Mrs. Rushworth widow of the late Rev. Thomas Rushworth, aged 67 years. Interred at Scarborough.

SADLER.—Annie Elizabeth Sadler, the beloved wife of Mr. Ephraim Sadler, of Haslington, died in the Lord, November 4th, 1909. Deeply lamented.

WALKER.—On November 5th, George Wales, late Society Steward at Low Fall P.M. church, Gateshead. In his 67th year. Interred at Lamesby.

WOODHILL.—At his residence, 22 Haverdon Avenue, Sefton Park, Liverpool, on Thursday, December 2nd, Edward Woodhill, of 52 years a member of Liverpool First circuit and for 30 years treasurer of Prince's Avenue church. "Well done thou good and faithful servant."

IN MEMORIAM.

MAYNARD.—Bertie, the darling and only son of G. P. and Nellie Maynard, admitted to the Shenberd's fold, Dec. 7th, 1908. "Jenny called a little child unto Him."

SHERMAN.—In loving memory of my darling sister (Lizzie), wife of Rev. J. Sherman, who passed safely Home at Dover her native town, December 6th, 1907. Aged 55 years. Her dear son and brother have joined her since. How sweet to meet.

TAYLOR.—In affectionate remembrance of father and mother, Joshua Barnesley Taylor, who died December 26th, 1895, and Emma Taylor, who died December 12th, 1907. Gathered Home.

THANKS RETURNED.

Mrs. RICHARDS and daughters desire to express their thanks for the sympathy received in their bereavement.

The sons and daughters of the late Susannah Staley tender their thanks to all expressions of sympathy received in their sad bereavement.

ST. ANNES-ON-THE-SEA.

Leeds Sixth Circuit gives grand effort for the "Quest."

Rev. G. Bicheno at Southfield, 10.30 (Also Special at 2, W. Lord, Esq., presiding).

At Silver Royd Hill, 6, Miss Amy Day, Soloist.

Lecture, Silver Royd Hill, Monday, 7.30; chairman, W. H. Corbier, Esq.; Rev. W. M. Kelley, Rev. H. Pickett, and numbers of Leeds ministers and leaders supporting.

Ministerial Changes and Engagements.

The Rev. J. W. Hutter remains at Ripon a second year.
The Rev. John Richardson stays a second year at West Ham.
Rev. W. A. Bryant removes from Wellingborough in 1910.
The Rev. J. F. Loveday removes from Portsmouth First in 1910 at the close of his probation.

Rev. Clowes G. Milson has accepted invitation to superintend Donington station for a third year, namely, 1910-1911.
Rev. W. Bridge leaves Newport and Cowes circuit July, 1910.

After seven years' service at Scanthorpe Rev. W. Turner will remove to Hull Third in 1911.

Rev. J. Lindley will remove from Rugby in 1911 on the completion of his fourth year.

Rev. J. A. Wales has accepted an invitation to superintend the Chelmsford circuit.

The Rev. C. Finlay has accepted an invitation as second minister to Crewe Second.

The Rev. J. Wellings removes from Bournemouth First in 1911.

The Rev. F. S. Button will remove from Bournemouth First at the close of his probation in July, 1911.

Rev. J. Miles Johnson leaves Micklethorpe circuit in July next. The circuit has not yet secured a minister to succeed him.

The Rev. W. H. Campbell has accepted the invitation of the Bishop Auckland station to remain a fourth year, 1910-11, when he will have completed his probation.

The Rev. J. Dinwick removes from Northwood in 1910 and is not yet engaged. Mr. Dinwick went to Northwood for one year to accommodate the General Missionary Committee.

Scholastic and Professional.

MR. CHARLES E. C. RALPH, local preacher of the Marylebone circuit, has passed the London University B.A. Honours Examination in Philosophy. Having completed with distinction his Arts course at King's College, he was recently admitted to the rank of an Associate. During the last year Mr. Ralph has been the leader of a successful Adult Bible Class at Fowell Street church, Notting Hill, W.

MISS ANNIE LEWIS, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Lewis, Dover, has passed with honours the recent examination in Solo Singing (Senior Division) in connection with the Trinity College of Music, London.

LIVINGSTONE HALL MISSION.

Supplies! Urgent!!

SIR—We beg to appeal to your readers on behalf of the hungry and suffering poor. The eloquent and powerful plea of the Rev. W. Spedding in your last week's issue will inspire many Primitive Methodists with a passion for Social Service and a desire to co-operate with those who minister to the unfortunate. The friendless, the hungry, the sick and the destitute are with us here in great numbers, and great is their claim upon our compassion.

The 'Lords' may refuse supplies to the King and his Ministers, but we refuse to believe that loyal Primitive Methodists will withhold supplies from their Lord's needy ones. Gifts of money, boots or clothing will be gratefully received and acknowledged.

In thankful anticipation,

Yours, etc., WILLIAM GLOVER.

Livingstone Hall, South Clerk Street, Edinburgh.

A Plea for Hospitality.

SIR—I was delighted, on opening my *Leader* to-day, to see my old friend, George Plummer, looking at me from one of its pages. I was no less glad to read 'A.T.W.'s' sketch of his life and character. One reference in that sketch awakened old memories. It was the reference to the hospitality of Mr. Plummer's home. Twenty-six years ago I went to reside in London, and found that home open to me. I was a stranger, and they took me in, and some of the happiest hours of my life were spent in the enjoyment of that hospitality of which your correspondent writes. What the warm welcome and encouragement I received there and then have meant to me I cannot tell.

I am inclined to think (and it is because I wish to say this rather than to pay compliments that I address you) that there is less of this hospitality amongst us than formerly. If I am right, more's the pity. Such kindness and thoughtfulness, if shown by more of our city Priests, would save many a young man and woman who, coming from the country to the town, are sore beset with temptations to forget the God and church of their youth. George Plummer and his wife—God bless her!—and people such as they do more to save the tempted than many who make more noise in the world.

Yours, etc., J. DONN JACKSON.

Ellesmere Port.

Roman Catholicism.

SIR—Many of your readers would like to know the truth concerning the murder of Ferrer. May I be permitted to suggest that they purchase 'The Martyrdom of Ferrer,' by Joseph McCabe, published at 6d. by Watts and Co., 17 Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, E.C. An article also appears in 'The Nineteenth Century Magazine' for November, by a friend of Ferrer, that should be read. The awful exposure made of the Roman Catholic Church in Spain, will, I trust, rouse Primitive to oppose the assumptions of Rome in this country. In 1908 there were 2,137 churches and missions in connection with Roman Catholics in England and 1,181 monasteries and nunneries. May England wake up to see her danger at once. Bristol, Yours, etc., A. A. KIDWELL.

HENSHAW STREET CHURCH, OLDHAM.

Debt Extinction.

HENSHAW Street church, Oldham First, is one of the largest and best known. It is a monument of the enterprise and devotion of those associated with its erection. The friends were among the first to adopt the plan formulated by Conference for the celebration of the Centenary. They decided that the first charge on money raised should be for the Central Fund. They also decided that money raised for local purposes should be for the renovation of the chapel and schools, and for the extinction of the debt on them and the circuit house. To accomplish these objects £2,000 was required; towards that £1,000 was promised at the time and has been paid. It was decided to raise the remainder by three bazaars, the third of which was held Nov. 24th, 25th, and 27th. On the 24th it was opened by Miss Hartley, of Southport, to whom a most hearty reception was given. Mrs. G. Adams, of Chester, presided. Her father—the Rev. W. Rows—was minister here when Henshaw Street chapel was built. On the 25th it was opened by Mr. Bunting. Mr. Bunting took a leading part in the erection of the chapel forty years ago, and has had an honored and unbroken connection ever since. Mr. Joseph Hall, who was reared in our Sunday school, presided. On the 27th it was opened by the children, when Mrs. John Holt—a true friend of Henshaw Street—received the nurses. The financial proceeds were £585, which sum, added to those previously raised, will enable us to meet all our financial liabilities and to say that Henshaw Street is now out of debt.

Debt Extinction in Liverpool.

FORTY-THREE years ago the 'Zion' church, Liverpool Third, was built, and from that time to the present it has been more or less hampered by debt. Nearly three years ago Sir W. P. Hartley offered to give fifty per cent. on what was raised for debt reduction in the following three years. At that time the debt stood at £225. Stimulated by this generous offer the friends from time to time added small sums to their debt reduction fund, and the effort reached a successful climax last week when a bazaar was held, by which £150 was realised in addition to working expenses, which, with Sir W. P. Hartley's proportion of £75, cleared off the debt. The bazaar income included a donation of £50 from the treasurer and circuit stewards. Mr. Morris Jones, to whose energy the sweeping away of the debt is mainly due. For a small church this has been a splendid achievement. Those taking part in the opening ceremonies of the bazaar were Mrs. R. Robinson, Mrs. Hy. Jones, Messrs H. Dobson, W. J. Ballie, J. P. St. Davies, M. Jones, M. F. Jones, Revs. W. Shipley, R. W. Barnett, J. W. Normandale, J. Burton, and W. Cooper. All the stallholders worked well.

Lancaster Centenary Bazaar.

A SUCCESSFUL bazaar in connection with Moor Lane church was held in the Alexandra Hall, November 17th to 19th. To the great delight of the friends Miss Hartley opened the bazaar on the first day, and N. W. Helms, Esq., M.P., presided. On the second day the Maymores, Mrs. R. Wilson, performed the ceremony, and Mr. Connolly G. Wright presided. Friday's opening was also much appreciated. Twenty-six children took part and contributed 5s. each. S. Leighton, Esq., presided.

The fine hall was beautifully decorated. Over the three congregational stalls, Mrs. Baines, Mrs. Fell, and Mrs. Parkinson presided, and which realised respectively £48 7s. 1d., £52, and £26 13s. 2d. The O.E. stall, £27 13s. Mrs. Geo. Mawson presided; Sunday school stall, £10 2s. 8d. Mr. W. Garth, president; toy and fancy stall in charge of Messrs J. Blackburn and H. Clark. £3 0s. 5d.; flower stall, supplied by Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Dean. £2 6s. 2d.; concertina arranged by Mr. J. Ferndale. £3 12s. 3d.; other accessories, £4 4s. 1d. The refreshment department, presided over by Mrs. J. W. Pilkington was a speciality and realised £38 0s. 9d. Entrance fees, £16 9s. 6d.; Handbook, £20; Gems of Thought, £5 12s. 6d.; Donations—Miss Hartley, £20; Mr. N. W. Helms, M.P., £5; Mr. J. C. Fell, Ashton, £5; Mr. H. L. Storey, £3; Mr. T. Chirside, £2 2s.; Mr. Connolly G. Wright, £2 2s.; Mr. C. Ambridge, £1 1s.; Mr. M. Stranding £1 1s.; Mr. H. Wright, £1; Mr. S. Leighton, £1; Children's Offering, £6 5s.; Mr. Henry Harris, a load of coals, £7; other friends 18s., making, with other small items, approximately, £300. For Centenary projects the Moor Lane church and school had previously raised £120, making a total of £420.

Scholars' Scripture Examination.

Lancaster First District.

Upper Middle Division—First prize, Hilda Renwan, 99 marks; 100 marks; Second, Beatrice Groves, Forest Gate, 99 marks; Third, Clarence J. Coleman, Penny Stratford, 98 marks.

Lower Middle Division—First prize, Frank B. Knell, Tottenham, 92 marks; Second, Beattie Bening, Forest Gate, 91 marks; Third, Harold E. Bristow, West Ham, 88 marks.

Junior Division—First prize, Merle G. Barker, Roxmore, 98 marks; Second, Mary R. Townsend, Bafford, 96 marks; Third, Hilda M. Young, Roxmore, 95 marks.

Sheffield District.

Upper Middle Division—First prize, Leonard C. Ash, John St., Sheffield Fifth, 100 marks; Second and Third divided, William M. Clare, Earlwood View, Rotherham First, 98 marks; Marion Ford, Walkley, Sheffield Fourth, 98 marks.

Lower Middle Division—First prize, Hilda Lauch, Langsett Road, Sheffield Seventh, 100 marks; Second, Evelyn L. Fenley, Parkgate, Rotherham First, 93 marks; Third, Mabel Barron, Intake, Sheffield First, 90 marks.

Junior Division—First prize, Doris Parkin, Whitworth Moor, Chesterfield Third 100 marks; Second, Cyril Parkin, Whitworth Moor, Chesterfield Third, 99 marks; Third, Florence A. Hedworth, Parkgate, Rotherham First, 98 marks.

Stories—Humorous and Pathetic of Northern Primitive Methodism.

(Selected from W. M. Patterson's Popular Book 'Northern Primitive Methodism'.)

Joseph Spoor's Joy in the Goad for Christ.

It was at Kipou where Joseph Spoor and William Fulton were arrested while they were holding a service in the Market Place. As they were conveyed to goal, accompanied by an immense crowd, they were very happy, and when Mr. Spoor heard that they were to be sent to prison, he shouted: 'Glory be to God! The little for Christ! Hallelujah! The little for Christ!'

Wonderous Revival Scenes.

A victorious campaign was opened at Appleton Works by Mr. Spoor, who was so powerfully moved and controlled by his sublime passion to save souls that it interfered with his eating and sleeping. Sometimes he became so filled with the glory as to be rendered unconscious, falling on forms and chairs, and once even falling on the fire. But in no case, however violent the fall, has it been known that he sustained any bodily damage or hurt. While having breakfast at a house, Spoor, at family prayer, laid hold upon the most high. The inmates fell upon the floor and cried aloud for mercy, and the neighbours were attracted by the strange noises. All the village became excited, and those who went into the house were over-mastered by the mighty influence. At noon a messenger was sent for Robert Walker, who assisted Mr. Spoor, and this couple carried on the meeting until 2 o'clock, when it was found that thirteen souls had got liberty.

A Sailor's Query.

The congregation in the Croft chapel, Hartlepool, were largely composed of sea-faring and fisher-folk, and it is related by ex-Principal Johnson that Captain John Bulmer, a member of the church, told the story that on one occasion, during divine service, a rough seaman unconsciously opened the chapel door, and with a loud voice called out: 'Above or below, is the mate of the Gudge here?' A vessel named the Gudge, having received her cargo, was ready for sea, and as a likely place to find the mate, the sailor went to the Croft chapel.

A Minister's Salary in Olden Times.

The Rev. C. C. McKenna's salary in Hartlepool. The following little quarterly account will be read with interest:—

	£	s.	d.
Bro. Colin C. McKechnie's salary	...	4	0
Do. Meat bill and lodgings	...	3	11
Do. Travelling expenses...	...	0	5
Do. Present	0	10
		<u>28</u>	<u>6</u>
			10

Quaint Circuit Minutes.

In telling the story of a busy Street chapel, West Hartlepool, the Rev. J. P. Langham has inserted some illuminating items from the old records. 'This one shows how carefully the revenue of the Street circuit was administered:— "That the young preacher's meals be lowered from sixpence to threepence a week. In 1842 the quarterly meeting resolved that "the superintendent have the two front rooms, and the second preacher the two back ones." Quarterly meetings and leaders' meetings watched preachers and members most keenly in the tuition, and the disciplinary powers extended to courtship and associating with the ungodly."

'Marra Me That.'

William Clementson, C. C. McKenna, and Joseph Spoor were the speakers at one of the missionary meetings at Aldersbrook. The collection had been taken before the latter got up, and Spoor had not been long on his feet before money was thrown on the platform from all over the chapel. Mr. McKenna, who sat on a chair, covered his face with his hands to protect himself from being hurt. Mr. Clementson ran to the pulpit and hid himself from the shower of copper, silver, and gold. Mr. Spoor stood his ground, crying out, 'Leave away, my lady, leave away!' Presently a sovereign rolled to the feet of Mr. McKenna. He at once laid hold of the coin, went to the front of the platform, and held it up before the audience, shouting, 'Marra me that! Mr. Spoor quickly remarked that when the yellow coin came chirping up on to the platform, and fell at Mr. McKenna's feet, his bottom blood was roused, and he could sit no longer.'

A Notable Revival.

'But it was the remarkable revival which began in Mid-dlebrook in the summer of 1897, and went on to four years, which attracted the attention of the religious world to such an extent that an ardent spirit has declared that the name of Ulster Street has gone out through all Christendom. Prolonged seasons followed in the church and school, as many as twenty-four penitents being at the communion rail at the close of a Sunday evening service. The Lovefeast following the United Lamp Meeting at Ulster Street and Lintworth Road, baffled all description, twenty-four seeking the Lord as the turner and turner-out at the latter. Upon one meeting the power of the Lord was so mighty that the people were almost lifted out of their seats, and the late Mr. Lind declared that he had never felt anything like it in his life. Penitents were sought out in their homes. Young men, after leaving the service, and waiting some distance away, would turn back, and march straight to the front for forgiveness. Drunkenards and gamblers became willing disciples of Jesus.'

Selling the Devil.

When Spoor arrived in the village, he accosted the first person he met, and asked him where Mr. Halse lived. 'Are you the new preacher?' questioned the man, who happened to be a member, and receiving a reply in the affirmative, invited the new owner to tea, remarking at the same time that there would be a law at the meeting. 'Will there not?' quickly responded Mr. Spoor. 'Glory be to God, the place will be full!' After again shouting 'Glory to God!' the man took tea, and bolt-

ed, leaving the preacher to find his way to Mr. Halse's house. The latter, though apt to despise, was one of those faithful souls who stick to their posts in the dark days as well as the bright, and to whom Primitive Methodism owes more than has ever been acknowledged. As he left the house to open the chapel doors he told Mr. Spoor not to hurry, as there would not be many at the service. 'I tell you the chapel will be full; Glory to God!' shouted the young enthusiast in reply, and the leader went his way thinking the preacher an 'odd chap.'

Mr. Spoor tucked his hat under his arm, put on a black velvet cap, which he used at open-air services, and, taking out his hymn-book, started from the door, singing down the street, frequently kneeling to pray, exhorting the people and announcing the service. All this he did without a soul to help him. Presently he came upon a number of men outwitted near a brewery for sport, gambling, or annoying passers-by. He sang right into the middle of them, and sweet down and prayer most earnestly. 'I've a guinea to be a grand sale to-night at the Primitive Methodist chapel,' he cried out, when he rose from his knees. 'We are going to sell the devil up, and leave him neither stick or stool, and I am the accumulator. The sale will commence as soon as I arrive at the chapel. You are all invited; come, every one of you.' He then sang away to the chapel, with a crowd following him. The piece was packed, and as he prayed and preached, strong men trembled, and many were the sign of the Lord. It was a turning of the tide in the moral and spiritual condition of that village, and the fruitage was influential for all time.

Great Personalities.

In the course of the decades there have been seasons of prosperity, of course, and Kendal has supported the church and the work with worthy men. That which seems to have been always spoken of as 'the great revival,' began in 1846, and evidently continued until 1860, the first manifestation taking place at Claverley. In the 1867 'Aldersgate'—almost sixty years afterwards—in the memoir of John Lupton Clayton, a prosperous tradesman in Carlisle, we read:—'His earlier years were associated with the late Rev. John Atkinson and John Taylor (at Claverley), the latter being his closest companion and fellow-apprentice in wood-turning. He was converted in the great revival of 1849-50, and with Bro. Taylor was among the first of a large number of young men converted. Nine of these entered the ministry. Among the last to yield was John Atkinson. The ministers named were giants. Edward P. Almond, a local preacher, conducted the service at which Atkinson was converted, and it was the singing of the hymn, "Depth of mercy," which brought the young man to his knees. "Ned" Almond held a claim at his house for the study of grammar, etc., the hour being generally 5 a.m.; and Almond, who had no qualms as to a teacher but who was put into the chair to ask the youths questions out of the book, was dubbed "the Doctor." The names of all those who became ministers were James E. Balmer (U.M.F.C. late of Blackpool), Daniel Jackson (who went to Australia), John Atkinson, John Taylor, his brother William (Congregationalist), James Lupton, and John, George, and Jeremiah Pratt. John Atkinson's son William is in the ministry in Australia, and the son-in-law John Harryman Taylor, M.A., of Malacca, is the son of John Taylor.'

An Unknown Pioneer.

Romance clings to the Western Borders as to the Eastern. Even the origin of Primitive Methodism in Carlisle was strange and romantic. An aged woman residing near Kendal—i.e., ought not to be altogether impossible to get her name—was converted in 1822 under the ministry of Peter Ludlam, one of the pioneers in the Westmorland town, and she brought a copy of the 'Small Hymn Book,' issued in the previous year by King's Bazaar, of Somerset, for the use of the people called Primitive Methodists. To her it was a treasure, and she became so consumed with a desire to share it with her brother-in-law, John Boothman, a hatter, at Kendal, and to tell him of the wonderful things of the 'Methodists,' that she set out one summer's day to walk forty-four miles to the border city to place the book in his hands. She had heard delighted Boothman, and set him on fire of curiosity. He got his son-in-law, also a disciple, to go to Kendal with his kinswoman to see whether these things were so, to inquire into the modes and laws of this new sect, and to bring back a report. What James Johnson, the son-in-law, saw and learned he gave to the older man on his return, and they were led to give themselves to this people and to adopt their methods. That woman had the honour of being the first Primitive Methodist missionary to enter Carlisle, and the story will be told of her for a memorial.

Joseph Jopling—A Saint.

'It may be truthfully said,' remarks this witness, 'that the Wigton circuit owes its existence to the strenuous and self-denying labours of Joseph Jopling. Perhaps his greatest triumph was the conquest of the colony of putters and un-keepers known as the East End of Wigton. They were a terror, not only to the people of Wigton, but to all the villages for many miles around. After their conversion their district became the quietest part of the town, and instead of drinking, fighting, and carrying with evil cases, prayers and singing of hymns were heard in almost all their homes. It was a real transformation.'

God's Coomes.'

'Waxes I hear ye! I God's coomes here, it's time as we've gotten! Let me out o' this!' An agitated woman thus gave vent to her feelings on December 2nd, 1822, while William Clowes was praying in Joseph Hain's station at the Dye House, Haltwhistle. Clowes was on his journey from Carlisle

to Haltwhistle quarterly meeting, and stopped at Haltwhistle on his way. A crowd had gathered in the afore-said kitchen to hear the strange evangelist, and he prayed with his accustomed fervour, faith, and vivid realism of expression. All in the house were moved, and some were terrified. He pleaded for the Lord to come down among them, repeating the petition several times, and crying: 'Come, Lord, come, come, come, come, come—come—come—come!' Then, rising into a more convulsed tone, he exclaimed: 'I hear the rumbling of His chariot wheels! He's coming! He's coming! He's coming!' It was at this juncture that the woman quoted above could contain herself no longer, and fled from the house. Others followed her, while many that remained were shaking from head to foot.

A Beautiful Picture of a Little Tyneside Bethel.

A realistic, yet beautifully tender, description of a week-night service, fifty years ago, in the old chapel at Walsaton, surrounded by the glare of the low-roofed, one-storied black-smiths' shops, has been sent us by an able correspondent, but only a touch or two of it can be given:—

'A score of voices of varying timbre, at the invitation of Matthew Pickering (whom the Angels of Love and Patience made their own), join in singing, "Thou Shepherd of Israel and mine," after which we are led to the Psalms, by simple heart language. Joseph Parker prays with open eyes, fixed on the ceiling, and his woe-worn voice and his wrinkles become as prominent as the spokes of guidance and deliverance from his difficulties. William Armstrong, with the woe-worn face, gently and smilingly leads us through our songs and hymns. Then come the numerous tones of George Hart, telling of Jesus' manifold, but in the darkness of the mine there was still the glorious light; and how that voice rolled and swelled as he prayed that we might, "like Zachariah and Elizabeth," go "hand in hand through Emmanuel's land" to larger worlds on high; then it broke as he told of those who had gone before. Robert Brooks, whose personality was unique, and whose seventy years still lightly upon him, rejoiced that Jesus was the seed of the law. "He has conquered for Brookes; oh, hallelujah!" he would exclaim; and as he prayed the glowing sunlight made his hair appear whiter than any teller on earth could whiten it, and the light that never was on sea or land" illumined both the speaker and his fellow-workers. Then Tommy Warren, the singer saint, took his part; he whose optimistic faith carried him through sorrows and over difficulties which would have paralyzed less heroic souls. Elison Clark, calm and judicious, and others less frequently heard, followed. Women were there, who came to keep their trust and trust their Lord, and were not disappointed; and young people were drawn and held by the mystic contagion, the influence of whose fingers with some to this day.'

'The "Hilberts" story has been often told concerning the first Ulster chapel:—
'A couple of gentlemen, passing down the lane by the side of St. Hilda's church, came within sight of the chapel, which was approaching completion. One of them exclaimed, "What building is this?" Before his friend had time to reply, a boy, who was playing among the rubbish, said, "Oh, sir, it's the lantern chapel." "The lantern chapel," echoed the gentleman. "Why, how in the world have these folk got a building like this?" If ye can around the other side, ye'll see, quickly responded the lad. The gentlemen, following the advice of the youth, went round to the other side of the building, and read this inscription on the wall, "Hilberts the Lord hath helped us."

Beginnings at Merton Colliery.

As Joseph Hain tells it, the beginning of the great revival at Merton is a striking story. Fired with the spirit of God, a group of men started to sing at Kingston Lane chapel door one Monday evening, and marched as they sang, saying they would go where the Lord would lead them. They proceeded to a plantation, prayed for several hours among the trees, and very early on the Monday morning they arrived at the door of Merton chapel. Taylor Kamey, the leader of the 'missionaries,' explained to Thomas Hunter—a man of power in several senses—and to the alarmed people that the Lord had sent them. 'We've been singing an "prayer" all week,' he continued; 'the Lord is gonna use us as a great war for the salvation of souls in this big colliery. Please open the chapel door.' It got spread about the rows and down the pit that Kamey and his men were praying in the chapel, and many passed thither. The 'invaders' had a big day, and the work spread. Messrs. Fenwick, Drummond, and Hain being at the front that winter, when nearly two hundred persons were converted. Not a few have gone home to heaven, but many of their families are in our churches, and others are serving their Lord in America and Australia.

Girls' Clubs.

If you would provide an extra attraction for the girls at the Church Club, install a billiard table for the winter evenings. The game is particularly suitable for girls, combining recreation with gentle exercise. They will thoroughly enjoy it and with a little practice they become so much experts of the game. The cost of the table—which is exceptionally moderate—is soon recovered by making a small charge per game. E. J. Riley, Ltd., Victoria Works, Aintree, makes tables to fit any size room, and as the tables are built in exact proportion to the standard tables the game is just as difficult—just as fascinating. Secretaries of Girls' Clubs and others interested are invited to write for fully illustrated catalogue, which will be sent post free. Easy terms of payment can be arranged so that it is not necessary to cripple the Club funds by paying cash down.

HEATON ROAD church, Newcastle-on-Tyne, has suffered a great loss in the death of Mrs. James Colman, widow of daughter of W. H. Leighton, Esq. From her girlhood she was associated with our cause, first at Nelson Street, then at Heaton Road, and in the interests of the mission, for which she received the thanks of Conference. Great respect was shown to her memory by the large representative company that attended her funeral.

LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

Baillie Street

Are-union tea party was held in the schoolroom at Smallbridge, on Saturday week. There was a large gathering of past and present scholars, teachers, and friends. After tea there was a public meeting at which Mr. Robert Turner presided. W. Herbert Earnshaw read an encouraging report. Addresses were delivered by Revs. J. A. Howarth, H. Gannt, Messrs. James Crabtree, Roobdale, and W. Taylor, Osselt. On Sunday special services were held. In the morning there was a young people's service, and short addresses were given by Rev. J. A. Howarth. In the afternoon and evening large congregations assembled. Old hymns were sung. The choir, largely augmented, gave a rendering of the anthems 'Gloria in Excelsis (Mozart)', 'Jerusalem, my happy home', and the 'Hallelujah Chorus' (Handel). Mr. A. J. Pilling organist, Mr. F. C. Howarth conductor. Preacher, Rev. J. A. Howarth.

Blyth

For the second year in succession the church at Bealington has made a splendid effort to reduce the debt on the property. This year's attempt took the form of a Gold and Crown night, held on Nov. 27th. After a much enjoyed programme by the choir the gifts were collected and the envelopes opened. The total amount realized is £38. The society is much cheered by this, and by the signs of a vigorous spiritual life. Mr. R. Grieves, of West Sleekburn, presided.

Bristol

Ebenezer church bazaar reported last week as having raised £8 13s. 6d. should have been £80 13s. 6d.

Galsborough

The married women's effort for debt reduction was held on Wednesday and was well patronised. About 200 partook of tea and afterwards Mrs. Toyn presided over a crowded audience. A concert was given by the married ladies of the church and congregation. Financial proceeds in excess of the married men's effort a fortnight ago.

Hull Second

At Fountain Road special services to celebrate the 'Harvest of the Sea' were held on Nov. 28th. In the morning Rev. F. W. Harp preached on 'An Unexpected Haul.' In the afternoon the chapel was well filled to hear a service of song. Readings given by Filey fishermen, our choir supplying the musical portions. At night the building was crowded when Rev. W. U. Rowe preached on 'The Conquest of the Sea.' The afternoon collection was devoted to the Central Centenary Fund. Total proceeds £9.

Ipswich

An encouraging twelve days' mission has been held, conducted by Mrs. E. I. Devenish. Some encouraging cases of conversion have been witnessed, one of an ex-convict of a five years' sentence, and a burglar who had forged his father's name for £5,000. On the first of this month a sale of work was opened by Lady Goddard, supported by the Revs. E. I. Devenish, E. B. Francis, and H. Bennett. The net profits are to be devoted to the fund for the expenses of renovation and altering the church to an estimated cost of about £300.

Liverpool Third

Following the three days' bazaar at Northumberland Terrace, the success of which was beyond expectation, the chapel anniversary was held last Sunday, preacher Rev. Fred Jeffs. Our Everton Road church rendered a cantata in the afternoon under the leadership of Mr.

W. Randals, entitled 'The City of Gold.' Mr. J. Taylor presiding. On Monday evening Mr. Jeffs lectured on 'If Woman Rule,' Councillor Lewis (of Widnes) presiding. Mr. M. Jones stated that 'Zion' had reduced the debt, which had been standing for fifty years, at the bazaar. Financial statement very satisfactory. A supper followed given by the teachers.

Lewton

In aid of the Centenary Central Fund, the young ladies connected with the Edge Green church recently gave a grand concert. An excellent programme of a varied character was rendered. Mrs. D. Byrom presided. Our young people worked right nobly. Proceeds £5. On behalf of the same object, a tea and lecture took place at Golborne, and good companies assembled. The lecture, given by our minister, was entitled 'Tom and Jack's lad,' and was very well received. Mr. H. R. Rigby presided, and the sum of £3 17s. 4d. was raised.

Middlesbrough

Linthorpe Road church have just held anniversary services. The Revs. J. G. Brown and W. Swales were the special preachers. Despite the heavy and prolonged depression in trade last year's fine total was almost reached. A commendable feature of the anniversary is the bringing of gifts to the minister in the vestry. No fewer than 63 gifts were received, ranging from 6d. to £5. Total proceeds, £56 15s. 8d.

Pudsey and Stanningley

Centenary mission services have been held at all the places in the circuit. At Roker Lane Mrs. Midgley, an old worker, came to assist the minister, and a very helpful week was spent. At Pudsey the minister held a week's services, and the Rev. W. M. Kelley continued a second week. Mr. Kelley commenced with a mass meeting on the Sunday evening at 7.45, addressed a women's meeting on Monday afternoon, and preached each evening during the week. The services were of a very high order, and profoundly influenced the church. At Stanningley the minister opened with a week's services, and the Rev. H. Pickup, of Arnsley, continued a second week. Here again the services were searching, and several young people, some from our best homes, decided for Christ and the higher life.

Retford

The young men held their annual 'At Home' December 1st, in connection with the forthcoming bazaar. The schoolroom was quite en fête, and, as in previous years, there was an excellent musical programme, presided over by Bro. G. Rule, after which there was a supper. Much credit is due to the young men.

Rotherham First

The memorial stones of a new school-chapel were laid at Dalton Brook on Nov. 16th. An excellent site had been given. The chapel will seat 200 people, and is to cost about £600. Eight stones were laid, four of which represented Sunday schools and societies in the circuit, the other four private individuals. Rev. R. Lush conducted the ceremony and was supported by Revs. J. Parlow and F. Morgan. Rev. J. E. Hughes, of Sheffield, gave an address. Tea was given by Mrs. Fell, of Rotherham, which was served in the Wesleyan schoolroom, and produced £5 2s. The after meeting was presided over by Conn. Dove, Parkgate, and addresses were given by Revs. J. Parlow, R. Lush, and J. E. Hughes. Proceeds for the day about £57. The opening will take place early in the New Year.

QUARTERLY MEETINGS.

Chester-le-Street

Quarterly meeting held on December 4th at Birtley. Reports showed the station to be in a healthy condition. A number of conversions have taken place at several of the churches during the quarter, and an increase of members was reported. A hearty invitation was given to the Revs. J. B. Nightingale and J. G. Sonlby for a second and third year respectively. Arrangements were also made for the holding of Centenary meetings in several of the churches and also for the great circuit demonstration. The station stewards, Messrs. T. Telford and T. Storey, were re-elected and a hearty vote of thanks was accorded Mr. and Mrs. F. Knox for providing the tea for the members of the quarterly meeting.

Grawe Second

The quarterly meeting was held on Dec. 4th at Mill Street. Pleasing reports were given of the work done. The financial report was given by Alderman W. McNeil and Mr. J. Norman, which was very encouraging. Arrangements were made for the honouring of the 'Pledge' of the second minister next July. Rev. G. T. D. Pidsley was unanimously invited as superintendent minister for 1910-11, and Rev. O. Finlay, of Thetford, as second minister in the place of Rev. G. Featony.

Crook

Quarterly meeting held on Dec. 4th. Revs. Tom Robson and Percy B. Carden received and accepted cordial invitations to remain a fourth year. The Centenary report, presented by Mr. S. A. Meddick, showed that over £300 had been paid up to date, and arrangements were made to secure the successful completion of the fund. The financial statement presented by the circuit steward showed an ordinary balance in hand of over £30. The Wolsingham Society was congratulated upon raising its Centenary allocation, £72, being the first society in the circuit to raise its amount. Mr. John Green was elected junior circuit steward, and the ministers liberated to speak and work for the Progressive candidate, Mr. Arthur Henderson, in the forthcoming campaign. Spiritually, numerically, and financially the circuit flourishes.

Darwen

The quarterly meeting was held on Nov. 27th, when there was a large attendance. Centenary matters were duly considered, and it was arranged that the quota due from the circuit to the central fund should be remitted after March meeting. The general work of the circuit continues in an encouraging condition. A unanimous invitation was given to Rev. L. Wright to remain a minister for a fourth year.

Glastonbury

The quarterly meeting was held at Street, Nov. 30th. There was a good attendance of officials. Arrangements were made for special services at the different societies during the coming quarter. The financial statement showed a balance in hand of £10 2s. 6d.

Guiseborough

Quarterly meeting held Wednesday at Lingdale. Three young men from Skelton were recommended for the plan. An increase in membership was reported. Circuit steward's report showed a good balance in hand. Record was made of the great loss sustained by the circuit by the sad death of Mr. D. Chilvers, Junr., one of our promising and brilliant young laymen, and a letter of sympathy was sent to the bereaved family. Arrangements were made to celebrate the Centenary Self-denial week in all the societies.

Hemsworth Mission

The quarterly meeting was held at Hemsworth, December 1st, and was well attended. The society reports revealed the mission to be prosperous and making steady headway. Two important building schemes, one at South Elmsall and the other at Kinsley, were submitted to the meeting and approved. A bright future lies before this mission. Rev. J. W. Booth accepted a unanimous invitation for a second year.

Leake

On Thursday last we held our circuit quarterly meeting at Fold Hill. We report an increase of 14 members for the quarter and several societies report an increase of income upon last quarter. Rev. W. Smith, F.R.A.S., leaves this circuit next July (1910) and seeks a smaller circuit (geographically) as super or second preacher.

Northampton Third

The quarterly meeting took place on Dec. 1st. Rev. J. H. Howlett was unanimously invited to remain a second year, and to the joy of all he consented. The circuit was found to be in a flourishing condition, and the outlook is very bright.

Otley

The quarterly meeting was held on Saturday at Ilkley, and was well attended. The various reports showed the circuit to be in a fairly healthy condition. Missions have been held which have deepened the spiritual life of the churches. It was decided to hold special Centenary thanksgiving services at each place on April 2nd, 1910. Mr. Ernest Fry, of Gais-

ley, was recommended for the preachers' plan. Rev. E. E. Jobling accepted a unanimous invitation to remain a second year. A strongly worded resolution, bearing upon the political situation, was submitted by Rev. J. Harding and enthusiastically endorsed by the meeting. It called upon our people to aid, by their sympathy, toil, and prayer, the cause of freedom and social progress.

Penge and Bromley

Quarterly meeting held at Bromley on Dec. 1st. Membership increased, especially at Orpington; finances balanced. Preliminary arrangements made for District Meeting, and Centenary matters advanced. Mr. Bean received a warm welcome as H.L.P., and gave an instructive and effective address on 'Prayer.' Profitable discussion led by Messrs. Bloomfield and Hayward.

Salisbury

We held our quarter-day at Bedcar, December 1st, 1909. There was an unusually large representation of officials. The report of members showed an increase on the quarter. The expenditure exceeded the income on the quarter, and a decision to raise the amount of allocation was carried. We recommended Mr. Coates as a candidate for our ministry. A new trust has been created at Marake. A bazaar has been arranged for Bedcar in December, an American evening at Salisbury, and a bazaar next year at Marake. The station is enjoying much prosperity. The Salisbury new church is to be ready for the opening ceremony on Easter Monday, and it is probable the Sunday school will be opened on Good Friday.

Selby

Quarterly meeting held on Dec. 2nd. Attendance the largest for a long time, and the spirit most amiable, hopeful, and enterprising. Membership slightly improved, and the finances normal. Missions full of promise are to be held at Selby, Cliffe, and Cambleforth, and negotiations are pending for others. A strong discussion took place on the action of the House of Lords, and a resolution was moved by Rev. C. Baldwin 'That we deeply deplore the action of the House of Lords in rejecting the Budget and thus acting in direct contravention of the established Constitution, and trust that the Prime Minister will stand firm and do nothing that will tend to endanger the Rights of the People's House.'

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LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

Balham

A Gold and Silver tree was held on Dec. 1st at Wimbledon church, Quicks Road, presided over by Mr. J. G. Metcalf, supported by Revs. T. Peatfield and G. Davies. The tree, decorated with gifts from friends connected with the circuit, was unveiled by Mrs. Metcalf, assisted by Mrs. Peatfield and Mrs. Keech. The envelopes containing the offerings, each enriched with a motto, were made to yield their fruits to the extent of £7 11s. 4d. for the benefit of the Trust funds. Solos were rendered during the evening by Miss Nellie Smith.

Bradford Fifth

A very successful sale of work was held at New Hey Road on Nov. 20th, 22nd, 23rd. The Lord Mayor opened on the 20th; the Lady Mayoress received the children's purses, who rendered services of beautiful service. Speeches were given by the vicar and curate of the parish. On the 22nd Rev. J. Welsh presided and the sale was re-opened by Lady Prinsep, and on the 23rd we were favoured with the help of Mr. H. B. Jones and Mr. D. Veal. The result, £54, is highly creditable to a small band of working folk.

Chester-le-Street

The Central church was visited by Messrs. Willis and Holland on December 1st. They were accompanied by Miss Cooper and Mr. H. Baakeyfield. In the afternoon Mr. Willis preached and solos were rendered by Mr. Holland. In the evening an organ recital was given by Mr. Baakeyfield and solos rendered by Miss Cooper and Mr. Holland. The organ recital and singing of the other two artists made a great impression on the audience. Mr. J. Dixon presided and a short address was given by Mr. Willis.

Gainsboro'

An American evening at Trinity Street realised £108. The effort was on behalf of the new church on Ropery Road. Councillor Whitton presided and Miss Rhoda Smithson opened the envelopes. Donations ranged from 1s. to £3. Money had been raised in a great variety of ways. Councillor Scott's class sang old Primitive Methodist tunes and hymns at intervals.

Hastings

A Japanese bazaar has recently been held in Newgate-Bd. church. On the first day Dr. E. E. Threadgale presided. Others present included Revs. T. A. Fairweather and J. Metcalf, and Coun. A. Blackman. The opening ceremony

was performed by ten little girls attired in Japanese costumes. On the second day the superintendent minister presided and the bazaar was declared open by A. D. Scow, Esq., J.P. The proceeds for debt reduction, £50.

Houghton-le-Spring

The quarterly meeting of this station was held Nov. 27th, and was largely attended. A slight increase in membership was reported, and a balance to the good on the current quarter of £4 13s. It was decided to hold a Centenary bazaar in March. It was decided to hold a convention on January 15th, to be addressed by Rev. S. Palmer and Mr. W. M. Patterson, with Mr. R. E. Barnes as chairman.

A bazaar was held on Nov. 20th and 22nd. The opening ceremony was performed on Saturday at 2 p.m. by Mrs. Grieve, supported by all the Nonconformist ministers of the town. The Rev. Jos. Tweddle, a former minister, presided. After a statement by the secretary, Mrs. Grieve was called upon to open the bazaar, and did so in a very appropriate address. On Monday the bazaar was opened at 5 p.m. by children in Japanese costume, and presided over by Rev. T. J. Watson. The object of the effort was threefold:—a. Installing of the electric light; b. Improved seating of the schoolroom; c. Renovation of the entire premises. Net result, £200.

Kelghley

Last Saturday a reunion of old scholars and teachers was held at Worth village. A large number of invitations had been sent out, and it was a pleasant sight to see the hearty greetings of friends who had not met each other for years. After tea a concert was given by a number of the old scholars. Mr. B. Burridge, who was superintendent of the school for many years, presided, and indulged in many reminiscences of the early days. Addresses were also given by Mr. J. E. Farrar and Mrs. S. Johnson. During the evening a Diploma of Honour was presented by Rev. J. Dodd to Mr. T. Baxter, who has been connected with the Sunday school for 34 years. In addition Mr. Baxter was presented with a large framed photograph of himself. On Sunday the special services were continued. Mr. W. Bennett preached in the afternoon, and in the evening the choir rendered a service of song.

Kelsale

The annual missionary meetings have recently been held at Kelsale, Orford, Southhall, and Snape. The deputation was Rev. J. Harper, of St. Neots, whose services were greatly enjoyed. We were glad that Mrs. Savage,

senior, was able to collect for the African Fund as usual, notwithstanding her fears on account of age. She was able to get to the meeting and receive congratulations on having raised £2 13s. 7d. 4s. 7d. above any of her many previous efforts. The total income was £2s. in advance of last year.

Knowlwood

On Dec. 6th our musical festival was held. In the morning Rev. A. E. Beavley preached a sermon on 'The Place and Power of Song.' In the afternoon and evening an augmented choir gave a splendid rendering of Handel's Messiah. The Knowlwood church is gaining local distinction as a musical centre and for its religious activities. Result £14.

Peterborough Second

Evangelistic services were conducted at Woodstones church by Professor R. W. Brown, Nov. 14th to 25th. At the close of each meeting the Professor received many inquiries from those who were anxious about spiritual things. He has manifested a special interest in the welfare of the young, and quite a number of youths and maidens have decided to become Christians. On Thursday last the services were concluded with a 'Faith Tea,' followed by a lecture by the missionary entitled, 'The Importance of Diet in the Treatment of Diseases.' Great interest was manifested in this subject, and many inquiries were made for further information.

St. Albans

On the 25th inst. £2 were raised at a tea and social promoted by Sister Webster towards the Ladies' Bazaar Meeting effort on behalf of the forthcoming bazaar in February next. 'Maxim's Matrimonial Mart' was rendered by several friends, together with Mr. and Miss Mitchell, of Luton.

Stanley

South Moor church has just installed a new organ which was opened by Councillor J. Green on November 27th. The opening sermon followed by Rev. B. Dennison. After tea a grand recital was given by Mr. Nelson and party. On Sunday sermons were preached by Mr. Henderson, of Chester-le-Street, and the Wesleyan Choir, of West Stanley, gave a concert in the afternoon. Mr. Pearson organist, Mr. W. Laws leader. The organ has been built by Mr. Nelson, of Durham.

Taile

Under the auspices of the circuit Sunday School Committee a most successful C.E. Rally was held at Butt Lane on Nov. 27th. The Rally was under the presidency of Mr. John Bewick, of Longton. Addresses were

delivered by Revs. G. H. Birch, of Hanley, and L. Hancock, of Longton. The Roll Call was conducted by Rev. W. Pedley. A gracious influence pervaded the meeting. Great praise is due to the secretary, Rev. F. E. Edwards, for the organization of the Rally.

Thetford

We have had a mission conducted by Mr. Frank Penfold, assisted by Miss Little Penfold and Miss Horner (soloists). The mission has been a great success. We have had the joy of seeing many brought to the Lord. The congregations have been good and we are expecting yet greater things.

Thornley

The quarterly meeting was held at Wheatley Hill on Saturday, November 27th. The Rev. W. Gellay presided. There was a large attendance of members. The financial report showed a balance of £2 16s. on the quarter's working. An increase of membership for the circuit was reported. The Rev. Geo. Armstrong visits the circuit in the interests of the Centenary fund on December 7th. Arrangements were made for a circuit bazaar to be held at Easter.

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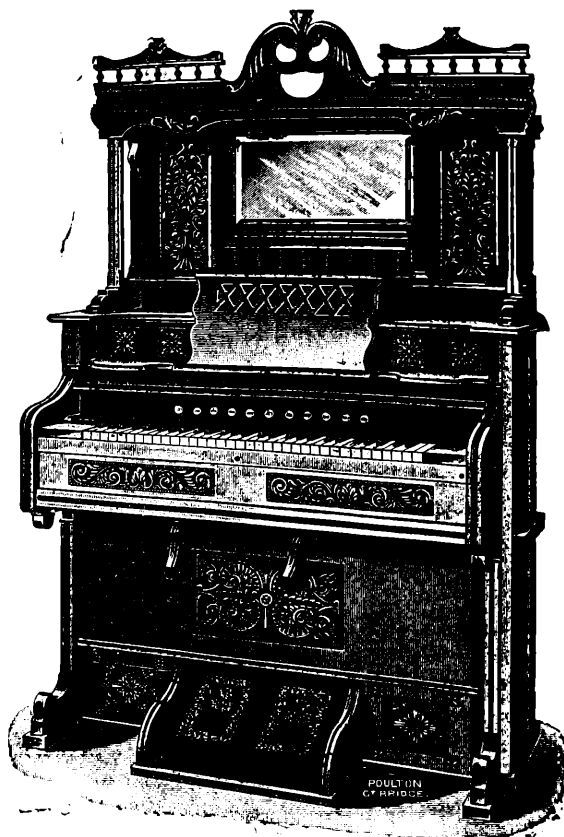
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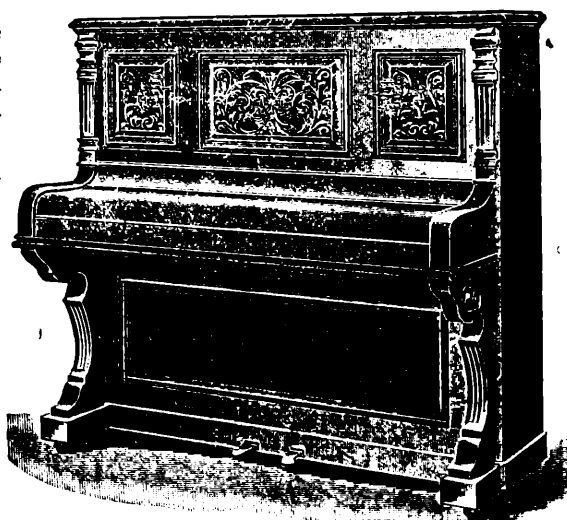
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