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ONE IS YOUR MASTER, EVEN CHRIST, AND ALL YE ARE BRETHERN.

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THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND & WALES.

JUBILEE MEETINGS IN MANCHESTER.

(Continued from last week.)

THE REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN'S SERMON.

The Free Trade Hall was on Tuesday evening crowded to its utmost capacity, the occasion being the preaching of the annual sermon, and the preacher the Rev. J. Baldwin Brown. Respecting this sermon, we quote from the special correspondent of the *Nonconformist*—

"The preacher, the Rev. J. Baldwin Brown, took a text, 'Launch out now into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught,' but this was the prelude to what may be described as an address rather than a sermon. This was, I think, advantageous rather than otherwise; as it gave the speaker wider scope, and enabled him to touch upon a number of topics which would not otherwise have been dealt with, and which at times almost tempted the audience to indulge in responsive cheers. I expect that opinions will differ as to, at least, some portions of this sermon-address. It was throughout striking, full of suggestiveness, and glowed with elevated feeling; but there may be a doubt whether Mr. Brown did not deal too severely with the failures and mistakes of the Church or the Churches, and award somewhat disproportionate praise to the 'humanities' of the scientists, philosophers, and philanthropists. But whether the speaker was depressing or hopeful—and he was both at times—he made a powerful and faithful appeal on behalf of breadth and catholicity, against theological and ecclesiastical narrowness; while he insisted that the day of mere authority was gone, and that henceforth Churches and systems would be judged by results. Congregationalists, therefore, needed such men as were their fathers, with their freedom, their love of truth, and their reliance on the Divine Spirit. With such men they would hold their place among the foremost in the quality of their service and ministry to mankind."

THE SECOND SESSION.

Rev. Dr. HANNAY spoke on behalf of the Jubilee Fund Committee. He commenced by announcing the list of contributions already promised to the Jubilee Fund, and he humorously complained that the sleepless efforts of the newspaper press to satisfy public curiosity had taken the bloom of novelty from the facts. The total sums promised by only a few individuals—as "preliminary to a beginning," the speaker said—amounted to about £48,000, or, including a list of ministerial promises, about £500,000. This however, includes Mr. Hudson's £20,000, and his name was received with loud applause; as were also the names of, I think, nine members of the Spicer family, who together contribute several thousand pounds. Next the speaker severely animadverted on the carping and censorious letters which have appeared in the *Nonconformist* and *Independent*, and which seemed to have been written with a view to damp the energies of Congregationalists in starting their new scheme. Why did not the complaining parties append their names to their communications? he asked, and the audience loudly cheered the inquiry, and then roared with laughter when he added that he himself had written only one anonymous letter in his life, and that was

when he was a boy at school! He also warmly repudiated the idea that they were chiefly anxious to raise money, for all their life long they had insisted on having able and earnest men for carrying on their work. He announced that the Rev. Burford Hooke, of Mold—of whom he spoke as having special fitness for the work—had been appointed travelling secretary to the Jubilee Fund Committees, and also gave some information as to the objects of and mode of raising the fund, and endeavoured to remove some misconception in regard to its administration. The address was throughout able, vigorous, and fervent, and was received with marks of great favour.

A "Report on the Census of 1881" was wisely taken as read, and it is to be hoped that it will be read, for it is full of most striking and suggestive facts. Two addresses, based on the report, were delivered by the Rev. Bryan Dale, of Halifax, and the Rev. John Brown, of Wrentham. The first dealt with the towns and the second with the rural districts, and both contained some very serious facts. Mr. Brown was particularly successful in interesting the audience, partly because of his descriptions of the present state and prospects of the agricultural districts, but also because of his sallies of humour. Referring to the idea of amalgamating village Churches, he described a particular species of village minister of one of the straiter sects, and then exclaimed, "Amalgamate him! Who with?" But he caused roars of laughter when he spoke of a small village in Suffolk with seven Churches of a different order—as many, he added, as there were in all Asia Minor! He was not sanguine in regard to amalgamation, though something might be done in the way of grouping, especially with an extension of lay agency, but there was no doubt that the Church-Aid scheme would be able to strengthen and encourage the struggling village Churches.

The Rev. Dr. HANNAY suggested that an opportunity might be afforded to some of the American brethren present to say a few words of personal greeting.

In accordance with this suggestion—

The Rev. Dr. SALTER (Iowa General Association of Congregational Churches) said he had felt greatly interested in the discussion in the morning in view of his own personal ministry. He had entered the ministry under the auspices of the American Home Missionary Society, and on leaving his seminary he had gone a thousand miles away to a new Home Missionary field with a promise from the Society that he should have their support to the extent of something less than £100. He laboured there for a few years as a home missionary, and always received his quarterly stipend with which he was enabled to live a few years until the Church to which he ministered became self-supporting, as it had continued to be ever since. He desired now to present the Christian greetings and salutations of the brethren in that mission field where there were a few scattered churches in a region of the United States, that at the time of the organization of the Congregational Union of England and Wales was occupied by savages, and from which savages went in the year 1832 to make war upon the peaceable settlement in the State of Illinois, and Abraham Lincoln went forth to beat back their incursions. There were now a million and a half of people living upon the soil of

the State of Iowa, and he was glad to say that the principles upon which the Congregational Union stood were represented and maintained there. They owed everything, however, to the mother country, and he believed they would never be wanting in their gratitude to those from whom they had received the principles they so highly valued.

The Rev. Dr. BUTTERFIELD (Michigan) also briefly offered the greetings and congratulations of his fellow-countrymen, and said he hardly knew whether he was most an American or an Englishman. Whatever questions might hereafter arise in the two countries, he believed they would henceforth be essentially one.

Rev. Dr. G. F. MAGOUN, being called upon to address the assembly, said. I do not know by what right your secretary gave the chairman my name against my solemn protest, except that it be on the ground that the chairman himself has just stated that I am rather more English than American, and so much one of you that this official dictator here thought he could do what he pleased with me, as he does with you, I know. (Laughter) I am happy to say that, like my American brother who spoke just now, I have been a Home Missionary sent into the wilderness, 1,300 miles from my home, on a salary of £80 a-year. I believe you have a line of poetry which describes some man—perhaps in the Establishment the poet meant—who was passing rich on £40 a-year. That was half as much as we young men were promised; but, perhaps, he had not any wife. (Laughter.) Like my brother Salter I went into the wilderness, and have had something to do with the great movement which has carried Congregational Christianity into the immense interior of the American Continent. Now, I want to say this, that, unless the spirit which this movement of this year and all these arguments and appeals are intended to evoke from English Congregationalism had prevailed in American Congregationalism, we never should have seen Congregational churches spread "from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth," for some of the children of those Home Missionary churches have from my own college gone away round the globe as foreign missionaries. It was the spirit which this jubilee movement is intended to animate in England which has extended home missions so wondrously in our land. We needed first of all the revival of religion which created our Home Missionary work, or we should never have done anything towards the evangelisation of the multitudes in the wilderness, and we hope to see that spirit in you in larger measure still. Taking the American view of the question, it seems to me that you have a problem here that you ought to handle and solve with great ease. Think of our continent—think of the influx of our people. We have forty millions—you are providing for twenty-five millions. Then think of the immense continent that we have to provide for, and here you have this—don't be offended—this little England. (Laughter.) Now, if we can in faith, and in love to our adorable Master, undertake, in our weakness and humility, that enormous problem which we have to solve, cannot you take care of little England? (Applause.)

Rev. Dr. FAIRFIELD, of Michigan, also spoke.

PUBLIC MEETING IN FREE TRADE HALL.

In the evening a public meeting was held in the Free Trade Hall. The chair was occupied by Mr. Colman, M. P. for Norwich; after the Chairman had spoken,

Mr. ALBERT SPICER moved, "That this meeting, composed of the most part of members of Congregational churches, looking back upon the history of those churches for the last fifty years, feels that, notwithstanding much cause for humiliation and searching of heart on account of imperfect and unfruitful service, there is reason for devout thankfulness to God on account of the large increase of the churches in number and influence, and of the good measure of spiritual health and general prosperity which they have enjoyed, and therefore heartily approves of the action of the Union in celebrating its jubilee by calling upon the churches to consecrate themselves afresh and with renewed zeal to the work of evangelizing the English people and to contribute to a special fund by which to strengthen their agencies for church extension and Home Missionary enterprise."

Mr. H. RICHARD, M.P., who was greeted with most enthusiastic applause, supported the resolution. He described himself as one of those who witnessed the formation of the Congregational Union. As a student in one of the London colleges, he attended the meeting at which the Union was constituted, and he had scarcely missed one year from that time till now, attending its anniversary celebrations.

The resolution was unanimously agreed to.

Rev. Dr. DALE proposed a resolution, and expressed a hope that in the next fifty years the Congregational churches of the country would sustain a useful and honourable part in the labours and conflicts of the kingdom of Christ in this and other lands. During the past fifty years two influences had severely tried evangelical faith in England. It had been under the strain of a general bias and tendency to deny the reality of the supernatural; but, in spite of the sore conflicts and perplexities to which some had been subjected, looking at the churches broadly, there was never a time when the supreme miracle of the Christian faith, the personal manifestation of God in the Lord Jesus Christ, commanded deeper or more passionate fervour from the Congregationalists of England and Wales. But there had been perils of another kind in the same period; the aspect of the English Church had been altogether changed. The power of the Evangelical party in the Church was now broken, and there had been a great revival of Romish doctrine and practice. But the Congregational churches were unharmed by either superstition or rationalism. They were at one with the Free Churches of the country on this matter, and together they would be too strong for the Establishment, even should it attempt to carry through the revival of Popery. (Applause.) In addition to this, Congregationalism was striving to adapt itself to the altered circumstances of the time, in order to reach the people of our own days. With a changing world, if the Church was faithful to her trust, there must be changes in the mode of her appeal to the people; but all the learning and architecture and noble music which now gemmed the ancient flag must be torn away if they concealed the form of