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We believe that most of our readers will be pleased to read the following synopsis of the life and labors of Dr. McLaren, whose name has become a household word among Baptists, families the world over. We therefore give it a place on our first page. It is taken from *The Christian Commonwealth* of England, written by his assistant.

Dr. Alexander McLaren at Seventy-Six.

By the Rev. J. E. Roberts, B. A., B. D.

(Dr. McLaren's Assistant.)

DR. ALEXANDER McLaren, the most eminent of living Baptist ministers, was born at Glasgow, on February 11, 1826. His father was a Glasgow merchant. His education was received at Glasgow High School, and then at the university of the same city. Subsequently he prepared for the Baptist ministry at Stepney College, since transferred to Regent's Park. Remarkable continuity has characterized his career, as he has been pastor of only two churches during a ministry of fifty-six years to this date. He filled the pulpit of Portland Chapel, Southampton, from 1846 to 1858. Since the latter date he has preached at Union Chapel, Manchester. His written sermons are very widely read throughout the English-speaking world. Dr. McLaren was elected President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland in 1875, and again in 1901.

In many Baptist homes there is a recent portrait of Dr. McLaren, bearing the inscription, "Our Grand Old Man." Very few will question the doctor's right to the title. At seventy-six, physically he is a tribute to the tenacity of a constitution nursed on Scotch porridge; mentally, he is a memorable instance of intellectual vigor, with unimpaired alertness and clear vision; spiritually, he is a shining example of grace abounding. Ten years ago it would have required a bold man to venture the prophecy that at his seventy-sixth birthday, Dr. McLaren would still be pastor of his large church in Manchester, and besides, filling the Presidential chair of the Baptist Union for the second time, would be rendering much active service to the denomination, both in his own city and throughout the country. Yet these are facts.

Naturally, there are signs that he is not so young as he was. His congregation notices that he is more exhausted after preaching than he used to be, and that there is a tendency to prolong the sermon, as if it were not quite so easy as formerly to give compact and balanced expression to all his thoughts. A recurring illness kept the doctor from his pulpit on quite a large number of Sundays last year. Perhaps the voice shows symptoms of tiring towards the end of the service. But these are only the slowly moving straws by which it is possible to detect the current. It is very difficult to believe that this man is seventy-six.

He stands in the pulpit erect as a dart. The flashing eyes still seem to pierce you. The clear voice reaches to the limits of the big chapel, and Dr. McLaren can still make himself heard easily anywhere. He takes the whole service himself. This is a great joy to the congregation. In his reading of the Scriptures is a sermon in itself. His prayers gain in richness of spiritual experience. The sermon is as wonderful as ever, with the same unerring insight into the meaning of Scripture, the same masterly exposition, the same apt and luminous illustration, the same stately language.

One pathetic reminder of advancing years was given by the announcement that the annual sermon to the young was to be preached this year by Dr. McLaren's colleague. "For fifty-five years, by the help of God," he had been accustomed to speak specially to the young, at the beginning of the year. The service has wonderful traditions, and attracts enormous congregations. Hundreds have been turned away, after the chapel was packed, and the lecture hall was crowded to an overflowing meeting. This year the doctor felt unable to bear the strain of the

crowd and excitement. He has given up preaching on Sunday evenings altogether. But he takes the service on Sunday morning regularly, unless prevented by illness. He drives down to the chapel, but he walks back to his pleasant home in Fallofield, not finding the distance of a mile and a-half too great, even after an exacting service. He does not leave his home again on Sunday, spending the remainder of the day quietly resting and reading. But he can often be seen walking into town on Monday morning, usually with a bundle of books under his arm to be exchanged at the library. And he walks the four miles to the centre of the city with an ease and elasticity of step which many a young man envies.

On other mornings than Monday, it is later before he is seen out. The doctor is an early riser; and several hours are given to study each morning. Part of the time every day is spent with the Hebrew Bible and the Greek Testament. Then the click of the typewriter tells of a mass of correspondence and of literary work, which has to be attended to. Before he goes out for a stroll, prior to his midday dinner, he has accomplished a good morning's work. He is usually accompanied by his faithful dog, Jerry. This animal was once described in the *British Weekly* as "a thoroughbred collie," and Dr. McLaren was heard to remark that "Jerry was not the first mongrel that the religious papers had magnified into a thoroughbred." Not infrequently this stroll leads him to the house of a sick member, for, though he does not attempt pastoral visitation, he always tries to see any of his people who have been connected for a long time with the church, in case of sickness.

It will interest all who wish to interview Dr. McLaren to know that he rests after dinner, and must not be disturbed. But when the "nap" is over, "click" goes the typewriter again, or the busy brain begins to weave the pattern of one of those wonderful sermons, or visitors are received. Although there are many calls on the doctor for social engagements, he spares very few evenings from his work. He takes the Wednesday night service whenever he can. Free Church Councils, Denominational Committees, meetings in connection with Owen's College and the Rylands Library fill up many afternoons and evenings. The various religious and philanthropic agencies in the city claim his presence and advocacy, nor do they knock in vain. It will be seen, therefore, that Dr. McLaren at seventy-six is a very busy man, putting in a full day's work regularly. The doctor lives alone with his only son.

His home life is very quiet, and it can never lose the shadow of a loneliness which is too sacred to invade. But the great preacher loves best to be in his study. He has the student's interest; and surrounded by his books, and with a pipe and armchair to supply an alternative to the Remington, he is happy alone.

And yet it is a great mistake to picture him as always in his study. People will not him to be. Dr. McLaren, at seventy-six is one of the busiest servants the denomination has. He has thrown himself heart and soul into the Twentieth Century Fund movement. He has preached for it, pleaded for it, button-holed individuals for it, visited churches, large and small for it, written for it, and done everything else for it that could be done.

It is inevitable that after such a lengthened pastorate; and at such an advanced age, Dr. McLaren should him sometimes that the time is at hand for retiring.

He seemed nearer to that ten years ago than he does to-day. His people are quietly confident that he will go on longer yet, and they do all in their power to assure him of their profound affection for him, and their gratitude to God for the high privilege they have enjoyed through so many years. "Dr. McLaren at seventy-six being what he is, why should there be any thought of an early cessation of that marvellous ministry of fifty-six years which, under God, has done so much for the religious life of England?"

Christian Commonwealth.

Sunny-Hearted Girls.

The best thing about a girl is cheerfulness. We don't care how ruddy her cheek may be or how graceful and up-to-date she is in all respects, if she wears a scowl she cannot be admired.

A sunny little body who is frail in health and has had sorrow that would make many another blue and pessimistic, is the soul of good nature, and extends her cheerfulness to each member of the family by her sunny ways and exciting in all a feeling of admiration and love. Perhaps it is her natural disposition, but it is surely a quality that can be cultivated.—The Boy's Lantern.

Looking Off Unto Jesus.

If men in the city walk the pavements with their eyes fixed upon the gutters, what does it matter though all the glories of a sunset are dyeing the western sky? They will see none of them; and if Christ stood beside you, closer to you than any other, if your eyes were fixed upon the trivialities of this poor present, you would see not Him.

If you want to see Him, shut out competing objects, and the dazzling cross-lights that come in and hide Him from us. There must be a rigid limitation, if not excision of other objects, if we are to grasp Him. If we would see, and have our hearts filled with the calm sublimity of the solemn, white wedge that lifts itself into the far-off blue, we must not let our gaze stop on the busy life of the valleys or the green slopes of the lower Alps, but must lift it and keep it fixed aloft. Meditate upon Him, and shut out other things.

ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D. D.

The Saloon Defined.

It is a business which every honorable merchant and business man hates and detests.

It is the standing dread of every mother.

It is the constant fear of every father.

It is the horror of every wife.

It makes ninety per cent. of the pauperism for which the tax-payer has to pay.

It keeps employed an army of policemen in the cities.

It puts out the fire on the hearth, condemns wives and children to hunger, cold and rags.

It fosters vice for profit, and educates in wickedness for gain.

Drunkenness comprises all other vices. It is the dictionary of vice, for it includes every vice. Drunkenness means speculation, theft, robbery, arson, forgery, murder, for it leads to all crimes.

—*Beran Evangelist.*

Way to Success.

The men whom I have seen succeed best in life have always been cheerful and hopeful men who went about their business with a smile on their faces, and took the changes and chances of their moral life like men facing rough and smooth alike as it came, and so found the truth of the old proverb, that "good times and bad times and all times pass over."—Charles Kingsley.