

On Sabbath the 24th February, I visited West Branch, River John. Here also we have many devoted adherents, and as usual the audience was numerous, the travelling being good. The Church is now in a tolerable state of repair. On the Sabbath following, being the 2d of March, I preached at Earlowin. The attendance was excellent, the church being quite full. There was a mixture, however, of the members of other denominations; and it is gratifying to every Christian man to find that sectarian prejudices are at length beginning to disappear, and a feeling of harmony to be restored, it being now more generally acknowledged that we are all members of one body whereof Christ is the head, and that the truest church is not necessarily the newest church, but the one which labors most to advance his glory and extend his dominion.

On the Sabbath following, I preached at Wallace in the forenoon, and at Fox Harbor school-house in the afternoon. On both occasions, the attendance was very fair. On the Friday following I again preached in Mr. Robertson's house, back settlement, Wallace, to a considerable audience. And on the following Sabbath, I visited Pogwash, preaching there both forenoon and afternoon. The Sabbath following, being the 23d of March, I officiated in the village church, Wallace, in the forenoon, and in the afternoon in a private house at the Ridge, Snake Road, where, as usual, the attendance was excellent.

MISCELLANEOUS

Advantages of Industrial Schools.

It may well be esteemed a privilege to be allowed to bear testimony, however feebly, to the inestimable benefits conferred on our land by the institution of industrial and ragged schools. For the great truth is pressed more solemnly and significantly upon us every day, that the battle of this country is to be lost or won by abandoning or reclaiming its outcast population. One trembles to think what would have been the result had Christian patriotism been twenty years later than it was of discovering this simple secret—(hear, hear.)—had 200,000, a standing army of juvenile delinquents, been permitted to grow up year after year in the British islands, unreclaimed and uncared for. Church and country alike uttering the heartless plea, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The old system of penal enactment and coercive restraint had its centuries of trial. It has been weighed in the balances and found wanting. The youthful culprit, emerged from the stern discipline and contaminating fellowships of the jail—savage and untamed as he entered—his appetite only whetted for fresh misdeeds—hydra-headed vice lashed for the moment into silence and subjection, rose only when the restraint was removed with renovated energy. The system of moral suasion and kind treatment was substituted. These unhappy outcasts were made to feel that they were the objects of Christian sympathy. Instead of imagining, as they had done, that a cold, selfish, heartless world was a deceiver, and deceiving as themselves, they learned to repose confidence in their benefactors. They were brought to

feel for the first time that they were the recipients of kindness, to know for the first time the music of the word "home," and the magic power of love accomplished what chain and cell, lash and prison, had failed to do. We all know that the gentlest and most silent agencies are often the most powerful. It has been said of the tubular Menai Bridge that the deflexion of it is greater under the warming rays of the sun than even when a monster train is passing over it. The tree in the forest which has defied ruder influences has at last had to yield under the silent falling of the snow-lake. The axe had not marked it. The breath of the tempest had passed over it unscathed—but flake by flake of virgin snow softly and gently loaded its branches—it succumbed and fell! (Applause.) The same moral influence has been brought with success to bear on these neglected children. Society awoke from its long guilty dream to discover that, nestling under these neglected rags, there beat many a noble human heart. The confession arose, and it has been faithfully echoed year after year in this hall, "we have been very guilty concerning our brother." Philanthropy has cast the hardest of these human hearts into the crucible of love—that heart has been melted, its passions calmed, its crimes bewailed. Aye, Sir, and in many instances that soul has been saved! Who, I ask, can look upon these poor neglected waifs of our population,—houseless, unsheltered, a terrible combination of ignorance and depravity, graduates only in vice, wandering stars, which have been suffered to drift away in devious and distant orbits from all that is kind, and sympathizing, and generous in our common humanity, uncommiserated while they lived, unwept for when they died? who but must feel that they are not in the position their Creator intended them to occupy; and that by cruel misfortune they are degraded to a sphere immeasurably beneath their birthright as children of immortality? We always pity and commiserate fallen greatness. The animal wallowing in the mire we do not pity; it is his native element, it would be unhappy elsewhere. But the prodigal, sharing its miserable hours, we do commiserate. He is not in his right place, away from his Father's halls and his Father's presence. We do not pity the insect or the worm crawling on the ground. It is earth born, and therefore its happiness is of earth. But the wounded eagle that has been cleaving the skies, soaring up with bold pinion to the sun, if we see it with broken wing fluttering and struggling on the ground, we pity it. Why? Because it has fallen from its native element. That child of the skies has been hurled with disabled wing from its freeborn searings. While the vile worm creates no pity, that fallen monarch does. (Applause.) Or, if I may be allowed another illustration, since your last meeting, indeed but a few months ago, England's great capital was breezed with huzzahs as a free people welcomed a free sovereign to the land of the

free. Whatever other feeling may have heaved high in the bosoms of these congregated thousands, pity would have had its place. It was a proud and befitting homage to one who has thrown a lustre of historical glory around his country and its arms, and who, amid the soiled jewels in the crowns of Europe, wears his untarnished. But how different,—how vast the contrast from the case of royal exiles who more than once within recent years, and in the memory of most of us, have trodden our shores. How ever responsible for their own sudden downfall, few hearts there were which did not offer their tribute of pity and sorrow for departed greatness. The hereditary scepter hurled in the dust, and, outcast and banished and forlorn, come to plead at an empire's gates that were never yet closed against the fallen. (Applause.) So it is with these outcast prodigal children, the objects of your pity. The crown has fallen from their heads. See these bundles of miserable ragged tatters, the filth without, nothing to the beggary, ignorance, and moral pollution within. Is it over these the great poet of humanity utters his apostrophe, "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason, how infinite! In faculty, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god!" O Lucifer! Son of the Morning, how art thou fallen! lying prostrate in the dust, a torpid, loathsome chrysalis, instead of mounting, like your fellows, with golden wings, to the regions of light and liberty, and joy. (Applause.) Alas! with them, too, there is this mighty difference, that their degradation is not their crime, but their misfortune. They have been more sinned against than sinning. (Hear, hear.) If they are called by the opprobrious epithet of "human vermin," whose blame is it that they are so? If they have been unfeelingly taunted by one of the lauded intellects of the day, as "attired in the unalterable livery of scoundrelhood," whose fault is it that this new and terrible representative class has been suffered to rise up in the midst of us in monster proportions? If they have been by a more truthful title designated "the Arals of the street," "their hand against every man," must it not be confessed, it is because long every man's hand has been against them?" But now, thank God, Britain has awoken, and is awaking still more, to her duties and responsibilities to these wretched Ishmael. Abandoned by their own parents,—cast off by drunken and reprobate fathers and mothers, whose oaths are the only dreadful form of prayer their children ever heard,—their natural affection brutalized into heartless cruelty,—I say forsake of their natural guardian, the public step *loco parentis*,—thanks to the patriotism and philanthropy of Scotchmen; the State, too, has interposed, and is at this moment interposing, by salutary enactments; although it does not by any means absolve the natural protector from his duties as