

REQUIRED READING, S. S. R. U.

STORIES OF EARLY METHODISTS.

SAMUEL WESLEY.

SAMUEL WESLEY, the father of Rev. John Wesley, was born in December, 1662. His parents designed him for the ministry, and gave him every advantage in their power. The great London Plague occurred during his childhood, followed in the next year by that terrible fire which made the greater part of the city a heap of ruins.

In 1678 his father died, leaving his mother a widow with several children, and very poor.

When in his twenty-first year, Mr. Wesley made up his mind to leave the Dissenters, among whom he had been educated thus far, and join the Church of England. By leaving the Dissenters he left all his friends who were likely to help him. He spent five years at Oxford, and during that time all the help he received from his family and friends was five shillings. . . . He had to find himself in clothes, books, and whatever more he might require. Besides attending to the duties of a servant, he composed exercises for those who had more money than mind, and gave instruction to those who wished to profit by his lessons.

Thus, by unwearied toil, great frugality, and energy, the almost friendless scholar not only supported himself, but obtained his B.A. degree, and retired from the University in 1688, seven pounds fifteen shillings richer than he was when he entered Oxford in 1683.

THE SWEARING COLONEL.

The Rev. Samuel Wesley was for some years a member of the Athenian Society, which published a weekly *Gazette*. The gentlemen of this Society used to meet in Smith's coffee-house, in London, to arrange the articles for the *Gazette*.

One day some gentlemen in a box at the other end of the room had in their company an officer of the Guards who swore dreadfully. Mr. Wesley saw that he could not speak to him without much difficulty; he, therefore, desired the waiter to bring him a glass of water. When it was brought, he said aloud,

"Carry it to that gentleman in the red coat, and desire him to wash his mouth after his oaths."

The officer rose up in a fury, but the gentlemen in the box laid hold of him, one of them crying out, "Nay, colonel, you gave the first offence. You know it is an affront to swear in his presence."

The officer was restrained, and Mr. Wesley departed.

Some years after, when Mr. Wesley was in London attending Convocation, a gentleman accosted him as he was going through St. James' Park, and inquired if he recollected him. Mr. Wesley said he did not. The gentleman then recalled to his memory the scene at the coffee-house, and added,

"Since that time, sir, I thank God, I have feared an oath, and everything that is offensive to the Divine Majesty; and as I have a perfect recollection of you, I rejoiced at seeing you, and could not refrain from expressing my gratitude to God and you."

"A word fitly spoken, how good it is!"—*Memorials of the Wesley Family.*

A BRAVE PRISONER.

Rev. Samuel Wesley was at one time in prison for three months. His imprudent political zeal involved him in serious persecutions. Besides injuring his cattle and burning his house, the rabble drummed, shouted, and fired arms under his window at night.

Under the pretence of a small debt which he could not at the moment discharge, he was arrested while leaving his church, and imprisoned in Lincoln Castle, where he continued about three months. But his native spirit never failed him.

"Now I am at rest," he wrote from the prison to the Archbishop of York, "for I am come to the haven where I have long expected to be; and," he adds, "I don't despair of doing good here, and, it may be, more in this now parish than in my old one." Like Goldsmith's good vicar, he immediately became a volunteer chaplain to his fellow-prisoners. He read prayers daily, and preached on Sundays to them. He was consoled by the fortitude of his noble wife. "Tis not every one," he wrote again to the Archbishop, "who could bear these things; but I bless God my wife is less concerned with suffering them than I am in writing, or than I believe your grace will be in reading them."

"When I came here," he said in another letter, "My stock was but little above ten shillings, and my wife's at home scarce so much. She soon sent me her rings, because she had nothing else to relieve me with, but I returned them."

When advised to remove from Epworth on account of his persecutions, he replied, "Tis like a coward to desert my post, because the enemy fires thick upon me. They have only wounded me yet, and I believe cannot kill me."

MR. WESLEY'S WIT.

Mr. Wesley was full of anecdote, and wise sayings, which gave to his private conversations great interest. The withering wit of his son Samuel, the quiet sarcasm of his son John, the playful railery of his daughter Emilia, and the keen satire of Mehetabel, were all inherited from himself. In early life he was connected with some of the greatest wits then flourishing, and to the day of his death highly relished pleasantries, when it was pure and good-tempered.

One instance, given by Dr. Adam Clarke, is as follows: At Temple Wood, near Epworth, lived a miserly man, who, contrary to the whole tenor of his life, once mustered courage enough to invite a few friends to dinner. Mr. Wesley was present, and displayed his wit, and his great facility in composition, by repeating impromptu, at the close of such an unusual festival:

"Thanks for this feast! for 'tis no less Than eating manna in the wilderness. Here some have starved, where we have found relief, And seen the wonders of a chine of beef. Here chimneys smoked which never smoked before, And we have dined where we shall dine no more."

Which last line was immediately confirmed by the mean-spirited host, who said, "No, gentlemen; it is too expensive."—*Life and Times of the Rev. Samuel Wesley.*

Count that day lost,
Whose low descending sun,
Views from thy hand
No worthy action done.

TRAIN THE BOYS FOR BUSINESS.

HERE is one element in the home instruction which boys receive prior to their advent into the business world to which too little attention has been given.

We mean the cultivation of habits of punctuality, system, order, and responsibility. In too many households, boys from twelve to seventeen years are administered too much by loving mothers or other female members of the family. Boys' lives through those years are the halcyon days of their existence. Up in the morning, just in season for breakfast; nothing to do but start off early enough so as not to be too late; looking upon an errand as taking so much time and memory away from enjoyment; little thought of personal appearance except when reminded by mother to "spruce up" a little; finding his wardrobe always where mother puts it—in fact, having nothing to do but enjoy himself.

Thus his life goes on till school ends. Then he is ready for business. He goes into an office where everything is system, order, and precision. He is expected to keep things neat and orderly; sometimes kindle fires, file letters, do errands—in short, become part of a nicely regulated machine, where everything moves in systematic grooves, and each one is responsible for the correctness in his department, and where, in place of ministers to his comfort, he finds taskmasters, more or less lenient, to be sure, and everything in marked contrast to his previous life.

In many instances the change is too great. Errors become numerous; blunders, overlooked at first, get to be matters of serious moment, then patience is overtaken, and the boy is told that his services are no longer wanted. This is his first blow, and sometimes he never rallies from it. Then comes the surprise to his parents, who too often never know the real cause, nor where they have failed in the training of their children.

What is wanted is every boy to have something special to do; to have some duty at a definite hour, and to learn to watch for that hour to come; to be answerable for a certain portion of the routine of the household; to be trained to anticipate the time when he may enter the ranks of business, and to be fortified with habits of energy, accuracy, and application.—*The Teacher.*

TALK OF A "FREE COUNTRY!"

One cannot walk the length of a block on the streets of Toronto, at certain hours of the day, without being forced, much against the will, to inhale tobacco smoke from some dirty mouth. One can avoid a staggering intoxicated man, keep out of his reach; but one cannot keep out of the reach of the vile fumes of the tobacco smoker one meets on the sidewalk. Smoking is prohibited in street cars, railway cars, and many other places; why should it not be so on the sidewalks, which are not infrequently so crowded that smoking becomes quite as disagreeable as in a street car? We believe there is a law in Boston prohibiting smoking on the sidewalks.—*Canadian Health Journal.*

"A MULE wid his ribs on the outside," is Pat's description of the Zebra.

ENGLISH HISTORY IN RHYME.

FIRST William, the Norman,
Then William, his son,
Henry, Stephen, and Henry,
Then Richard and John;
Edwards, one, two, and three.
And again after Richard
Three Henry's we see.
Two Edwards, third Richard,
If rightly you guess,
Two Henrys, sixth Edward,
Queen Mary, Queen Bess;
Then James, the Scotchman;
Then Charles whom they slew.
Yet received after Cromwell
Another Charles too.
James, Second, the exile,
Then Mary, his daughter,
And William, her husband,
From over the water;
Next Anne, best woman and queen,
Best ruler and wife
That England has seen.
George First, from Hanover.
First king of his line;
George Second, the next
Of this house from over the Rhine.
The third of these Georges,
For his tax and oppressions,
Left to George Fourth
His curtailed possessions,
Then William the Fourth, of Hanover, too,
Who, false to his wife,
To his country was true,
Left the throne to his niece,
Princess Victoria,
Since Norman, fifth queen,
(Of the kings they were peers.)
Who ruled over England
In eight hundred years.

A GLASGOW FACTORY-BOY.

JUST above the wharves of Glasgow, on the banks of the Clyde, there once lived a factory-boy, whom I will call David. At the age of ten he entered the cotton-factory as "piecer." He was employed from six o'clock in the morning till eight at night. His parents were very poor; and he well knew that his must be a boyhood of hard labour. But then and there, in that buzzing factory, he resolved that he would obtain an education and become an intelligent and useful man. With his first week's wages he purchased Ruddiman's Rudiments of Latin. He then entered an evening school, which met between the hours of eight and ten. He paid the expenses of his instruction out of his own hard earnings. At the age of sixteen he could read Virgil and Horace as readily as the pupils of the English grammar-schools.

He next began a course of self-instruction. He had been advanced in the factory from a "piecer" to a spinning-jenny. He brought his books to the factory, and placing one of them on the "jenny," with the lessons open before him, he divided his attention between the running of the spindles and the rudiments of knowledge. He now began to aspire to become a preacher and a missionary, and to devote his life in some self-sacrificing way to the good of mankind. He entered Glasgow University. He knew that he must work his way; but he also knew the power of resolution, and he was willing to make almost any sacrifice to gain the end. He worked at cotton spinning in the summer, lived frugally, and applied his savings to his college-studies in the winter. He completed the allotted course, and at the close was able to say, with praiseworthy pride, "I never had a farthing that I did not earn."

The boy was Dr. David Livingstone.—*Chatterbox.*