

**Impressions of the Welsh Revival.**

BY REVS. G. ROBERTS HERN AND EVAN THOMAS.

(Baptist Times)

The reports of a revival, a week ago, though very brief, were sufficient to awaken a strong desire in a native to witness the scenes reported from the region of South Wales. Mr. Phillips' first article added to this desire, and the request of my deacons to go finally resulted in my leaving post-haste for the locality. I scarcely knew what to expect. The nearest imagination was a successful mission service, and the train journey was largely employed in trying to anticipate the scene, the effects, and the emotions. But the actual experience was totally different, and probably the scene was most accurately described as "indescribable." I went to Caerphilly the morning after the visit of Mr. Evan Roberts, and was told that the meeting had actually continued till six o'clock in the morning, and that phenomenal results had accrued in each place where a meeting was held. There was intense curiosity to see Mr. Roberts. When I did see him, I found a natural and unaffected young man, with no exceptional characteristics. He has a pleasant face, and the look of a man who has a set purpose, a strong will, a happy disposition, and a faith in the Presence and Personality of God the Holy Ghost so intense, that I do not wonder at the influence he has exerted. He is not of the emotional type. He leans more to the thoughtful. But most of all he is practical and direct. He complains of the curiosity to see him, and declares it works against the benign influence of the Holy Spirit. He asserts repeatedly that he is nothing, and desires to be obliterated so that God's Presence and Power may be felt and acknowledged.

I have been with the revival for a week, either actually on the spot or in the trail of the evangelist, and I confess that I thank God with a full heart for the great experience. It was impossible to be a mere spectator. Numbers of visitors could be seen from all parts. Bewilderment was the first sign; interest the next. Emotion and religious fellowship were the ultimate and certain results. The only explanation which can be given of the experience is that it comes from God. The wind bloweth where it listeth. I have tried to detect any human element—personal magnetism and psychic effects. We cannot in anything deny these powers, but these have only the slightest place, if any, in the great wave of blessing over South Wales. It has come of God. It has come suddenly. It has come in answer to the prayers of multitudes in the churches. It has struck dumb even those who desired it most, by the spontaneity and overwhelming force it has revealed. I could as easily fill the whole issue as I can fill the allotted space in reciting incidents, startling as a romance, affecting as the pathos of home and life, convincing the mind that it is naught less than the unmistakable impact of the Spirit of God on the spirit of man, the breath of the Holy Spirit palpably subduing the human heart, and evoking, as from an Eolian harp, the weird, mystic, yet joyful melody of a soul in tune with the Infinite and the Eternal.

Said a minister who had passed through a rapturous time: "If all my experience of the past, and all the knowledge I have gained were obliterated from memory, I should need nothing to be added to the experience of three darkly solemn and mysterious hours I had in my prayer meeting." The most amazing things occur with perplexing frequency. The Holy Spirit has not so much organized the movement as disorganized human agency, custom, experience. I attended, with only two brief intervals, a meeting that had neither formal beginning nor end, from 1.30 p. m. to 1.30 a. m. As people entered they sang, although it was one hour and a half before the appointed time. There was no programme and no leader of the meeting. Ministers, choirs, organs, hymn-books, and all the customary adjuncts of Christian worship were divinely superseded or disused for the time. The most impressive meetings have been directed and every proceeding dictated, by the unseen but manifested presence of the "pure" Spirit of God. I have heard three or four hymns and refrains started at the same time, and the whole audience guided to select instantly some one which has subdued us by the pathetic suggestion and appropriateness, to some special case and need of the moment. The actual experience beggars description. It must be felt to be understood. I lived in Wales for nineteen years. I have seen some glorious times. But nothing in my experience can approach this, either in its characteristics or in general effect. I have heard several prayers proceeding at the same time, also singing, and yet there has been a sense of congruity and sublime harmony. And what has affected me more than I can tell, whilst the audience as a whole was, under the mighty sway of the Holy Spirit, moved to song and rapturous confession, has been to see any number up to a hundred, some silent with tears of joy or memory streaming down their faces; others with faces buried in their hands and bent before them in deep reflection or prayer; the white tense looks of men and women, with eyes gazing steadily, as if on the beatific vision, or expectant to see the "Holy Grail" pass in the auspicious time; or the silent moving lips of men and women in advancing years, with grey hairs thickening amongst the brown, and the hoarfrost upon the dark—silent lips moving in prayer (who shall tell!) perchance for son or daughter, husband or wife, or for forbears nigh to the passing. I stayed at one hotel—

licensed, too. The publican sent all his servants. He went himself. He was full of interest. I know, too, that at three in the morning there was a prayer meeting around his fire, and the most fervent "Amen" came from him. He loves his Lord, he hates his business. Don't criticise, but pray for him.

I fear I must reluctantly draw to a close as I am nearing the end of my two columns. This is the impression it has made on me. It is, too, the unanimous opinion of visitors whom I have questioned. As an infidel said after his first meeting: "There's something in it." After the next: "There is no doubt God is in it," and decided to burn his books or lock them up for ever.

There have been some untoward incidents reported. They might have been expected; but I saw one particularly. It was nothing dreadful. Imagine the tremendous impulse the Spirit of God in a personality whose mind and emotions have never been developed or retained, but a few excesses here and there (exceedingly few) should never be selected for criticism. The *Lancet* and *Truth* and other periodicals do not understand. It is a case of the "carnal mind" which does not understand the things of the Spirit. There are no canons of criticism or principles of analysis to apply to a "mystery." That it is a mystery I confess. That it is the mystery of God I am certain, for the manifestation is ethical and spiritual. Magistrates and solicitors and policemen testify to the change of society. Breweries and public-houses and clubs report a slump in business. Theatres, concerts, socials have lost in the competition of the prayer meeting and the revival. Infidels have become believers. Brutal and hard men of dissolute ways have become gentle. Men of foul speech have chosen a fresh vocabulary. Men who were sitting in darkness, amid the grim and ghoulish phantoms of a distempered life, have passed from darkness into life. Those whose senses were gross and whose moral obliquity was great have been translated from the low region of the animal to the Kingdom of the Spirit—the transcendental, en rapport with God and the spiritual world.

G. ROBERTS HERN.

**An Appreciation.**

BY REV. EVAN THOMAS.

Rev. Evan Thomas, minister of Havengreen church, Ealing, gave a graphic account of his personal experiences of the religious revival in Wales before a large congregation on Sunday night. Taking as his text the words, "And they were amazed and were in doubt saying one to another, What meaneth this?" Others mocking, said, "These men are full of new wine," the preacher remarked how helpless we were in the matter of a spiritual awakening. All that we could do was to wait, watch, believe, hope and expect it. We could not organize it any more than we could organize the breaking of the dawn. For some weeks, he continued, he had been watching, through the Press and the communication of friends, the gradual rise of religious awakening that was every day deepening, widening and spreading over the Principality; but the previous week he went down to the mining town of Ferndale, in Glamorganshire, to see for himself and talk with those who had been associated with it from the beginning. And one of the features of the movement that struck him most was its perfect spontaneity. It was not got up. It came. There was no consultation or organization, not even a committee meeting, and no one spoke of the means to be used. All that could be said of it was "The wind bloweth where it listeth; thou hearest the sound thereof but knowest not whither it cometh or whither it goeth." The only permutations of its coming were to be found in the deep secret longings of the hearts of a few men mostly poor, who met together and prayed. That was all they prayed. Their hearts burned within them, by the way a strange freedom possessed them in their communications with God and with one another, a new joy poured into their souls, and from them the fire spread to family and church and district until the whole principality was aflame. Prayer-meetings were held at midday and midnight, by the roadside and in the coal pits, men singled out their fellows before the mercer seat; the slaves of lust, the drunkard, the unbeliever, the prize fighter were all moved by the Spirit and became changed men, and they in turn united with others in prayer for those still in darkness. He had heard dozens of these men pray, and their prayers possessed a power which held his very soul spell bound and the like of which he had never felt before.

The movement, he urged, was wholly independent of the young man Evan Roberts—it was Christ's. Mr. Roberts, during the meetings at Ferndale at which he (Mr. Thomas) was present, was calm and quiet; he seemed clothed with humility and gentleness, and Jesus shone in every feature of his remarkable face. He did not profess to possess genius or remarkable mental power. His little broken talks were brief and childlike: what some would call commonplace. He simply waited, leaving the singing and praying and reading of the Word to the people themselves as they were led by the Spirit of God. The four conditions he laid down for converts were: to part with the past, forgive others, submit entirely to the guidance of God's Spirit, and make full confession of Christ before men. But ere he had finished his little talk had been broken by a dozen songs, and prayers. And so the meeting went on for two or three hours

without a halt, all without confusion; the verses of our favorite hymns as "Who is a pardoning God like Thee" being sung for half an hour and even an hour, until the gospel of the hymn had sunk into their souls.

Another feature of the movement was the large proportion of young people concerned in it. The awakening in 1859 was chiefly an awakening of old people inspired by the fear of cholera; this was essentially an awakening of young people, especially young men, inspired by love. There were those who cruelly criticised it and called it madness. If it were he would to God they had more of it. The *Lancet* warned people against lunacy. *Truth* falsified its name and called the movement hysteria, and Dr. Torrey, the evangelist, counselled revivals of sobriety and preached moderation. Emotion, said Dr. Torrey, was the chief feature of the revival; but it was not emotion that was responsible for the extraordinary scenes he had described and for the wave of ethical power that was lifting the nation to a higher plain, as the publicans, the theatrical people, the police, and the magistrates could testify. "God bless the revival," said the chairman of the Bridgend Bench when told that the revival was responsible for the small list of charges. The very horses in the coal-pits could testify to the reality of the movement, for they missed the curses and the blows, and if other evidences were needed, it was to be found in the fact that drunkards had become sober and libertines pure, family feuds were being made up, bad debts were being paid, sectarian boundaries were being broken down, Anglican Churchmen were desirous of making friends with their fellow Christians, and the only leader recognized was Christ. So absorbed were the young men in the work that popular and innocent pastimes were being forsaken for want of time to enjoy them.

**Education of our Girls.**

MRS. S. G. EIGHAN.

In this day of training schools for everything and everybody, we turn naturally with particular interest to the education or training of those most precious ones—the dear, sweet girls of our households. I say, most precious, because their influence in future years will be more far-reaching and more pronounced upon society than that of our boys. The importance of a work so difficult and delicate is worthy of serious thought.

Of course the physical development of our girls receives our first direct attention, though mental, moral and spiritual are so closely connected with it, it is hard sometimes to make a distinction. I should say that naturalness and simplicity should mark the effort to develop from the beginning. Nature is always to be preferred to art. Its methods of culture are ever most easily carried forward, most pleasant and therefore most beneficial. Play then, with companions of their own age, is the natural mode of physical culture for girls as well as boys. Running gymnasium is very carefully directed, the risk of over-exertion is far less to be feared. Games which are severe do not build girls. Their recreations should be simple, not unduly exciting, nor frequently varied. Evening amusements extended into the hours of the night, or of an exciting character overstrain the mental condition and are followed generally by nervous exhaustion; those that keep the mind in an equable condition are the best.

But work may be made just as pleasant and conducive to health as play. Domestic tasks in this respect, are excellent for girls. They can be taught to like them, to do them cheerfully, regularly and with pride, and to cultivate the old-fashioned quality of industry in youth, at the same time.

An able thinker and educator has said that manual work of some kind is a necessity for the highest mental development of a human being. At once we think of schools for this purpose (and they certainly have their places), but the sensible, old-fashioned mother leads the way, allowing her daughter to take part in them, knowing that she is educating her physically and mentally thereby, each day, is the best school. Alas! that the care of girls is left by so many to nurses, kindergartners and teachers, from the time they open their innocent eyes in the world, until they gaze in wonder into the professor's face. Oh! the girl who sat at mother's knee and learned to hem the dainty fell, to put in the intricate gusset, and to stitch dear father's wristband—all for the quiet hour with mother, without any thought of training—Oh, blest dear daughter—Oh, blest sweet mother—Oh, blessed hallowed memory!

There is much that might be said upon the matter of food, dress, early hours, length and time of exercise, hours of study, and the importance of each, but again a sensible mother can inform herself if she wishes. Let her read of the principles inculcated on the young Victoria by the wise Duchess of Kent—the economy and domesticity—and of her devotedness to purpose.

Physical training is of such importance because mental, moral and spiritual depend so largely upon the physical condition. Too little time or thought is given to it by parents or teachers, and yet we say, "A sound mind in a sound body," and we might almost add, "fine health" for physical attractions, certain marriages and healthy offspring.

For mental and moral culture for our girls, again that which is natural and simple is best. The tendency to