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Religious Miscellany.

BEHIND IT ALL.

BY REV. T. HEMSTAD.

Over the sands
In a hundred lands
The waves with a tremble of earthquake roll;
Something is seeking a far off goal,
Not to be reached till the stars shall fall.
The river slides to the windy sea,
Above the pines on the windy mountain;
Down the lily throat drops the bee,
Dreadfully floats the moon on the fountain;
What is there standing behind it all?

Under a dark and gloomy row
The follow coffin moulder and crumble;
Ah! little we care and little we know
How the kindly hours, day after day,
Ashes to ashes fall away.

Under the snow,
Above the snow,
Roar of city and factory's rumble,
Coming and going and losing and getting,
Laughing and cursing and praying and fretting,
Dead men in the street,
Dead hearts in the hall,
Didomed brows, shoeless feet,
What is there standing behind it all?

Alike in the joy and orange lands
A mighty phantom forever stands,
Swaying the billows and counting the sands—
Above the coffins the roses glow,
Making sunrise,
In children's eyes,
Not in these that are sealed below;
And public hurricane, secret woe
Like a cloud the palace and cottage warp,
Bat the world till its pillars snap
And the dusky wings of the vulture flap
In a charnel land, in a dying soul,
And the stars in an ancient silence roll

To a mystic goal;
Two feet by six feet and all—
The river slides to the windy sea,
Above the pines on the windy mountain,
Down the lily-throat drops the bee,
Dreadfully floats the moon on the fountain;
The CROSSER standing behind it all.

RECOLLECTIONS OF BISHOP ASBURY.
BY AN OLD METHODIST.

For many years my father (the Rev. William Garrett) lived near the great road leading from the Carolina west, across the mountains of Buncombe Co., N. C. Whoever crossed these in the earlier days, remembered it in after years. The country was sparsely settled, and but few to work the roads. The tide of emigration was large, and the mountain gorges and steep were washed and worn, so that in some cases, in addition to the fatigue of the trip, it was hazardous. In process of time the public necessities favored the formation of a joint-stock company to make a turnpike along the bank of the French Broad River, from Asheville to Paint Rock, affording smooth, safe travel, and avoiding the hills of Big Ivy and Hopewell, the terror, formerly, of man and horse; and it was over this turnpike that Bishop (then Dr.) McTear, a few years ago, rode as the top of a stage-coach, in the month of October, admiring the beautiful scenery along the route at that season of the year, and of which he gave such a graphic description in the *Advocate*.

Over these mountains the Methodist preachers journeyed in other days, on their mission to the settlements rapidly forming in the West; who often passed these wilds in hunger, cold, rain, and mud, attended with fatigue and inconvenience, but without hesitation or complaint, in prosecuting their noble work.

Bishop Asbury made his journey down in his episcopal train the first he was guarded through, against the hostility of the Cherokee Indians. I knew one of the men who attended him with gun in hand, and have heard him relate many of the scenes that occurred. The Bishop often stopped at my father's house, either to rest after crossing, or recruit and prepare for the journey. This preparation consisted in resting the stock, having them shod, repairing the carriage if necessary, (usually a strong Jersey wagon,) overhauling wardrobe, washing the faces, and supplying the provisions-box. In this work the members of the Church cooperated cheerfully, considering it a privilege to do something, even to the giving a cup of cold water to the Bishop and his traveling companion. Every thing arranged, the brethren in the vicinity assembled to see the cavalcade depart. Prayer was attended to, and the "Good-by, God bless you," said with deep emotion. Two men went along to assist in crossing the river and getting over the hills. Their return was looked for with interest to hear how the party got along, and especially how the aged Bishop stood the fatigue of the journey.

Bishop Asbury made his last trip over this route in 1815, as he was attempting to reach the South Carolina Conference from the West. It will be recalled that he died in March, 1816. He reached my father's house greatly enabled by age, and had taken a violent cold, which added to his affliction. He remained a few days, in which time remedies for his cold were applied, and everything done that would benefit him for the coming journey. The Church from the vicinity collected to pay respect to the aged apostle, and look upon him whom they expected to see no more in the flesh; and upon such an occasion, it required no little determination to protect him against intrusions, well intended to be sure, but interrupting the rest and quiet he so much needed. By arrangement of my mother, times were fixed upon when the Bishop, sitting, received the short calls of the brethren. I was a lad, and noticed every thing, for the occasion was new and interesting to me, and remember the appearance of this aged servant as seated and brooded with pillows. My father led me up, and presented me to him, and the old man, extending his right hand, placed it upon my head, telling me to

rest upon me, and that I might be directed, and brought in the right way. This interview, and the solemn circumstances attending it, made an indelible impression upon my mind, and has had no little influence upon my after-life. In the contests, with its trying and rugged scenes, amid disappointments and discouragements, and when "my feet had well nigh slipped," the recollections of that venerable servant of God, his hand upon my head, with eyes lifted to heaven, and praying for a blessing to rest upon him, has inspired courage and faith by which I have been brought to stand on firm ground.

Such is my personal recollection of Bishop Asbury. Fifty-eight years have gone with me since, and yet it remains in its impressions—through sunshine and shade, the calms and storms of an active, busy life. I have often thought, in this connection, of the importance attached to the ministerial character—especially of the aged—in intercourse with the young, and how important little offices of advice and instruction, that pass away from the mind of the preacher in every day concerns of life, leave their impression to linger and grow, and at last ripen into Christian character. In this case, the aged apostle, after doing this kind office, passed on, and perhaps in increased infirmities, never thought more of the striking boy upon whose head he placed his hand, and asked a blessing; but the impression was made, only to grow stronger with increasing years.

What a blessing the visits of preachers are, or should be to families! In the times of which I speak, the circuits were large; but few preachers were married, and so they had their homes in the families of the membership. This was considered a privilege. The resting-place of a circuit preacher upon his work, was looked upon as favored, temporally and spiritually, as was the house of Obadedom while it contained the Ark.

REV. MRS. VAN-COTT.
REV. W. W. McLEROY.

What is called the "woman question" has not only its political and social aspects, but its religious side as well. The Divine and human institutions of society are so correlated that a question like this must touch every one of them. The State, the family and the Church, are all affected by it. It is for this reason that we have become familiar with such expressions as "Woman's work in the Church," "Woman's relations to the salvation of the world," "Woman's mission to the lost," etc.; and the over and over again propounding of the question: "Shall a woman be suffered to preach or teach in the Church?"

A part of this question Methodism has long ago settled. Our women have always been encouraged to speak, and lead in prayer in our social meetings, and have always held, in this capacity, an honored and useful place among the working agencies of the Church. Their prayers, their counsels, their exhortations and songs, have been a heritage of power in the past, and doubtless will be equally so in the future. Another part of this question, however, is still unsettled; and is likely to be for some time to come. That is, Shall woman be eligible to, and encouraged to enter the ministry of the Church? This phase of the question has only lately developed itself, and the Church is unprepared to give an answer, either positively or negatively. It wisely prefers to wait until it has more light. Anything, therefore, which has a bearing upon the solution of this problem, must have an interest connected with it, which aside from this, and by itself it would not have.

The lady whose name heads this article is a representative woman in her respects than any. She is the first woman regularly licensed to preach in the Methodist Episcopal Church. She has almost a national reputation as an evangelist and revivalist. Her work, and the results thereof, must necessarily have a great bearing upon the question. A portrait of the lady, her manner of work etc., painted like Cromwell's, with all the scars and wrinkles put in, may be of some interest to the readers of the *Central*.

Physically, Mrs. Van Cott is a splendid specimen of womanhood; or as she perhaps would say, of *manhood*. She is of medium height, and weighs two hundred and forty pounds, and wears her garments not exactly in the fashion, but so near it as not to attract attention. Her voice is heavy and masculine, and husky from excessive use. She talks with all her might from six to eight hours a day; and her lung power and bodily labor have seldom been transcended by the most zealous backwoods exhorter. The physical fervor of her pulpit work is prodigious, and her powers of endurance incredible to any one who has not witnessed them. Evidently she has no faith in the Apostle's doctrine, "bodily exercise profiteth little."

Intellectually she is not at all superior to the average woman usually found in village society. She has considerable mental force, and is sprightly and vivacious, owing to her exuberance of animal spirits; but there is at the same time an evident lack of the higher intellectual qualities. She is not in the least a philosopher; is almost devoid of the creative faculty; has not the remotest idea of logical relation, and is therefore never troubled with contradictory propositions and statements. She possesses a bright scenic faculty, however, which enables her to vividly portray scenes from Bible history, and real life, with fine dramatic effect. Her action under the inspiration of this faculty is very fine, adding to the word painting a vivacious almost real. This is undoubtedly her strong point. She has no

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What is called the "woman question" has not only its political and social aspects, but its religious side as well. The Divine and human institutions of society are so correlated that a question like this must touch every one of them. The State, the family and the Church, are all affected by it. It is for this reason that we have become familiar with such expressions as "Woman's work in the Church," "Woman's relations to the salvation of the world," "Woman's mission to the lost," etc.; and the over and over again propounding of the question: "Shall a woman be suffered to preach or teach in the Church?"

A part of this question Methodism has long ago settled. Our women have always been encouraged to speak, and lead in prayer in our social meetings, and have always held, in this capacity, an honored and useful place among the working agencies of the Church. Their prayers, their counsels, their exhortations and songs, have been a heritage of power in the past, and doubtless will be equally so in the future. Another part of this question, however, is still unsettled; and is likely to be for some time to come. That is, Shall woman be eligible to, and encouraged to enter the ministry of the Church? This phase of the question has only lately developed itself, and the Church is unprepared to give an answer, either positively or negatively. It wisely prefers to wait until it has more light. Anything, therefore, which has a bearing upon the solution of this problem, must have an interest connected with it, which aside from this, and by itself it would not have.

The lady whose name heads this article is a representative woman in her respects than any. She is the first woman regularly licensed to preach in the Methodist Episcopal Church. She has almost a national reputation as an evangelist and revivalist. Her work, and the results thereof, must necessarily have a great bearing upon the question. A portrait of the lady, her manner of work etc., painted like Cromwell's, with all the scars and wrinkles put in, may be of some interest to the readers of the *Central*.

Physically, Mrs. Van Cott is a splendid specimen of womanhood; or as she perhaps would say, of *manhood*. She is of medium height, and weighs two hundred and forty pounds, and wears her garments not exactly in the fashion, but so near it as not to attract attention. Her voice is heavy and masculine, and husky from excessive use. She talks with all her might from six to eight hours a day; and her lung power and bodily labor have seldom been transcended by the most zealous backwoods exhorter. The physical fervor of her pulpit work is prodigious, and her powers of endurance incredible to any one who has not witnessed them. Evidently she has no faith in the Apostle's doctrine, "bodily exercise profiteth little."

Intellectually she is not at all superior to the average woman usually found in village society. She has considerable mental force, and is sprightly and vivacious, owing to her exuberance of animal spirits; but there is at the same time an evident lack of the higher intellectual qualities. She is not in the least a philosopher; is almost devoid of the creative faculty; has not the remotest idea of logical relation, and is therefore never troubled with contradictory propositions and statements. She possesses a bright scenic faculty, however, which enables her to vividly portray scenes from Bible history, and real life, with fine dramatic effect. Her action under the inspiration of this faculty is very fine, adding to the word painting a vivacious almost real. This is undoubtedly her strong point. She has no

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