

## Our Contributors.

### DR. BOANERGES DISCOURSES ON THE WIDOW'S MITE.

BY KNOXONIAN.

Having learned that a number of people in his congregation are in the habit of excusing their small contributions by alluding to the widow's mite, Dr. Boanerges called them together for the purpose of explaining to them the exact nature of that scriptural incident. He also desired to show to them that the widow's mite could not be made a precedent for small giving, and to prove that the widow was one of the most liberal givers of whom we have any knowledge.

Like some of the meetings held by modern evangelists, the Doctor's meeting was "for men only." The congregation looked somewhat "hard," and its looks did not in any way betray its real character. The Doctor addressed himself to his task in plucky style, and spoke as follows:

Dear friends,—I am creditably informed that when you give a cent apiece for Home Missions, and 2 cents for Foreign Missions, and 2 cents for Colleges, you strike an attitude, look solemn and say, "I give the widow's mite." My purpose in this address is to show you that men of property like you, who don't give perhaps the ten-thousandth part of your means for religious purposes, have no right to quote the example of that widow. I must pull you out from behind the widow and put your conduct under a true light.

In the first place, gentlemen, I say

YOU ARE NOT WIDOWS.

That is where your case breaks completely down. You are not widows. You are men. A widow often has hard work to keep the wolf from the door. She has often to fight a terrible battle to get bread for her children. She is often weak and helpless. You are men, strong, stalwart men, and yet every time the collectors go around you try to palm yourselves off as widows! Some of you are bachelors. I have reason to believe that two or three of you are trying to induce some young ladies of the congregation to go to the marriage altar with you. That is right enough, but do you think any spirited young woman will give her hand to a young fellow who calls himself a widow? Do you think any decent man will give his daughter to a fellow who calls himself a widow every time the collector comes around? If you do you are much mistaken. Young ladies worth having don't marry widows. Respectable men don't bring up good daughters, and hand them over to sneaking fellows who call themselves widows when they are called upon to do their part like men in any good work. If this talk about the widow's mite cannot be stopped in any other way, I shall instruct the collectors to say to every man who drags in the widow to make his cent collection look religious,

MISTER, ARE YOU A WIDOW?

Notice again that this widow was *poor*. You are not poor. Heaven forbid that I should say one word that would hurt the feelings of God's poor. May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth when I consciously utter a word that wounds the feelings of any of God's children who have little of this world's goods, but are rich in faith. I repeat you are *not* poor. Some of you grumble all season about poor crops, but if one of your barns should happen to burn down after harvest, somehow or another you always lose \$2,000 or \$3,000 worth of grain. Some of you never have any money, but I have noticed that when a bank breaks or a loan company goes to pieces you always lose a lot of money. That's queer, isn't it? Mere coincidence, I suppose.

Now, gentlemen, I have disposed of two points. You are *not* widows, and even if you were you are *not* poor.

Let us now turn to a third point, and you will find your case breaks down again. This widow

GAVE ALL SHE HAD.

Do you give all you have when you give a cent or 5 cents, or even \$1? Do you? If some of you gave as much as this widow you would give good farms with all your stock and implements and everything else you possess in the form of property. Others would give all their buildings and town lots and property of that kind. Others would hand in their bank and other stocks. To give the widow's mite means that we give *ALL*. When a man has given the widow's

mite he has no more property left than Job had after he met his severe losses. After a man has given the widow's mite he hasn't money enough left to pay toll or break the Scott Act. Gentlemen, let me tell you plainly you never gave the widow's mite. The Church wouldn't take the widow's mite from you. Even the Methodists would not take all a man has. Nobody gives the widow's mite now. Perhaps nobody ever did but the widow herself.

Now, gentlemen, allow me to ask you not to attempt again to make a cent collection decent by an allusion to that widow. That noble woman has suffered for nearly 2,000 years by being forced into company with close-fisted men. The poor woman gave all she had, and the reward she usually gets for it in this world is to have her conduct quoted as a cover for the meanest of collections. Gentlemen, that kind of work must stop in this congregation. Don't tell the collectors again that you are giving the widow's mite unless you are a poor widow, and are giving all you have.

### NOTES OF TRAVEL IN THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND.

I closed a former letter with some notes on Chatterton and Coleridge and Southey. To show what a strong hold the contemplated Susquehanna expedition had taken of Coleridge's imagination, I begin this letter by quoting a few lines from his *Monody* on Chatterton, which may help to throw some light on the characters of both:

O Chatterton! that thou wert yet alive;  
Sure thou would'st spread the canvas to the gale,  
And love with us the tinkling team to drive  
O'er peaceful freedom's undivided dale;  
And we at sober eve would round the throng,  
Hanging enraptured on thy stately song,  
And greet with smiles the young-eyed Poesy,  
All jestily masked, as hoar Antiquity.  
Alas, vain phantasies! the fleeting brood  
Of Wee self-solaced in her dreamy mood,  
Yet I will love to follow the sweet dream,  
Where Susquehanna pours his untamed stream,  
And on some hill, whose forest frowning side  
Waves o'er the murmurs of his calmer tide;  
And I will build a cenotaph to thee.  
Sweet harper of time-shrouded minstrelsy!  
And there, soothed sadly by the dirgeful wind,  
Muse on the sore ills I had left behind.

BRISTOL—THE CRADLE OF METHODISM.

Methodism as a substantive, organized sect, existing independently of the Establishment, originated in Bristol. On May 12, 1739, was laid the foundation stone of the first Methodist chapel in the world. It was enlarged in 1748, and still exists, though now in possession of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists. It appears to have been a commodious preaching hall, with two adjoining apartments, in which Wesley and other early preachers sometimes lodged. In this preaching room in the "Horse Fair" was held the second Methodist Conference in August, 1745, the first having been held the previous year in London. In this connection, it may not be amiss briefly to refer for the benefit of the present generation, to some of the

TRIALS ENDURED

by those early dissenters from the Establishment. And here let me parenthetically say that the same spirit exists at the present day, though it dare not manifest itself here exactly in the same rough manner it once did. In one of his letters John Wesley gives an account of some of the trials to which he had been subjected at that early day. Under date of March 19, 1742, he writes: "I rode once more to Pensfold (six miles from Bristol) at the request of several serious people. The place where they desired me to preach was a little green spot near the town. But I had no sooner began than a great company of rabble, hired for the purpose, came furiously upon us, bringing a bull which they had been baiting and which they now strove to drive in among the people. But the beast was wiser than his driver, and ran always on one side of us or the other, while we quietly sang praise to God, and prayed for about an hour. The poor wretches finding themselves disappointed, at last seized the bull, now weak and tired after having been so long torn and beaten both by dogs and men, and by main strength partly dragged and partly thrust in among the people. When they had forced their way to the little table on which I stood, they strove several times to throw it down by thrusting the helpless beast against it, who of himself stirred no more than a log of wood. I once or twice put his head

aside with my hand, that the blood might not drop on my clothes, intending to go on as soon as the hurry should be a little over. But the table falling down, some of the friends caught me in their arms, and carried me right away on their shoulders, while the rabble wreaked their vengeance on the table, which they tore bit by bit. We went a little further off where I finished my discourse without any noise or interruption."

In 1739 Wesley instituted a school at Kingswood (four miles from Bristol) for the colliers' children, and in 1748 a large school was opened in the same district for the education of the sons of itinerant preachers. Judging from the account given of the school by

DR. ADAM CLARKE,

it must have been a regular "Dotheboys Hall." Young Clarke presented himself one day at Kingswood, as a poor boy who had come from Birmingham, and after paying sixpence for his bed at Bristol, had only three half pence left. We should perhaps say that he left Birmingham at three o'clock a.m., on August 24, 1782, and reached the "Lamb" inn, Bristol, same night at eight o'clock, his whole food during the day having been a penny loaf and a half penny worth of apples. The day had been stormy, and he had been wet through more than once. Next morning he walked to Kingswood, but there was no room for him. After travelling several hundred miles by sea and land in quest of an "Utopia," he now finds all his hopes in a moment crushed. Telling Mr. Simpson, the head master, that he had spent all his money and had nothing to subsist on, it was agreed he should lodge in a spare room at the end of the chapel, until Mr. Wesley should return from Cornwall.

Mrs. Simpson, suspecting he might have the itch, as he had come from Scotland (both Mr. and Mrs. Simpson were Scotch), she was not satisfied until he had rubbed himself from head to foot with Jackson's itch ointment (a box of which was next day given to him). The room into which he was put contained only a wretched old bureau and a "wainscot bedstead, flock bed and scanty bedclothes." The weather was cold and wet, no carpet on the floor nor any furniture except a rush-bottomed chair. Bread and milk was all he had for breakfast, dinner and supper, and not enough of that. He had to make his own bed, sweep his room and empty his wash basin. They would not even bring out his box from Bristol; so he had to go to town and carry his box on his head more than four miles. His books consisted of a small 18mo Bible, a 12mo edition of Young's Night Thoughts; Prideaux' Connected History of the Jews, and Buck's 8vo Greek Testament. This was bad enough, but worse was to follow.

CONTINUED TRIALS.

One day young Clarke told Mr. Simpson that he was starving with cold, and showed him his bloodless fingers. He was then taken to the hall, where was a cord hanging from the roof, to the end of which was affixed a cross stick. He was told to jump up and catch the stick and swing until his hands recovered their power. He did so, but in a few minutes Mrs. Simpson came and drove both him and her husband out of the hall, under pretence that they should dirty the floor! "A more unfeeling woman I never met." He says: "I feared her more than I feared Satan himself. She was equally saving of candles and coals; if my candles were not extinguished at nine o'clock, I was called to account. To prevent her from seeing the reflection of light through my window, I set my candle on the floor behind my bed, took off my coat and hung it on the back of the chair, and sat squat on the floor and read." All this to avoid his uncomfortable bed. He asked permission to work in the garden where was a sort of pond of rainwater. In this he occasionally bathed, "contending with frogs, snakes or eels and vermin of different kinds." How would students of Canada, or any other country, like treatment of this character? Happily, the last fifty years—those of Queen Victoria's reign—have effected many improvements in all departments of life, school boy life amongst the number.

It was in Broadmead and Portland Chapels, Bristol, that the

BATTLE WAS FOUGHT AND WON

between antiquated sacerdotal custom and enlightened scriptural freedom, for here it was that the Methodist ministry claimed and first exercised the right to administer the sacraments, and by so doing