

a Leith ship-builder, being bound for a term of years as apprentice, and continued to follow this occupation as a journeyman, both in England and Scotland. About the time of his going to Edinburgh, at the beginning of the present century, the Haldanes were making no little stir by their "new-fangled" preaching, and the pulpits of the land rang with fulminations against "wolves in sheep's clothing." Their only answer was a blameless life. They will stand through all time ranked among Scotland's greatest benefactors, and they lived to enjoy the esteem of all classes and churches in the land. Thousands owned these men as their spiritual fathers. Drawn by curiosity, the subject of our story listened to the words of eternal life proclaimed by James Haldane, in the circus of Edinburgh. These words proved effectual to a change of views and purpose, and were followed by his joining the church under the care of Mr. Haldane. Men of no little distinction were connected with this church at the time. Dr. Patterson, who went to Denmark, and subsequently to Russia; Dr. Henderson, who went to Iceland, and afterwards was principal of a college in England, and Dr. McClay, who came to America, were all champions in the interests of religious truth; and yet another man of mark, who went to Africa, John Campbell, known to everybody.

Not only were men of mark in this church, but it enjoyed the occasional services of some other distinguished preachers of the day. Among the number was Rowland Hill. The quaint sayings and doings of Mr. Hill have given birth to extravagant anecdote; yet the reality was very novel to the minds of sedate Scotchmen. The youthful shipwright was present in the circus when this Episcopal clergyman effected a change of posture in praise, that has prevailed among dissenters ever since. Mr. Hill gave out a hymn, and, to his surprise, the whole people kept their seats and commenced singing. He called out in tones of thunder to stop, and every voice was hushed. An earnest lecture followed on the impropriety of worshipping God in a sitting attitude. Then the church membership arose, and the song of praise proceeded. Again Mr. Hill's voice silenced the united volume

of several thousand tongues, and a second lecture brought the entire congregation to their feet.

The Calton Hill was then, as it is now, a favorite resort for open-air preaching. Thousands, at the time of which we write, congregated there to listen to Gospel truth from the lips of Mr. Hill. On one occasion, when passing up to the spot from which he spoke, he observed a long row of well-dressed ladies comfortably seated. He stopped short, turned to the ladies and said: "Ladies, you look very fine and appear very comfortable. I hope you will not allow a poor person to pass your door."

Connected with the Haldane Church at this time, were four other apprentice shipwrights, besides the subject of this sketch, all of whom were converted under the ministry of its pastor.

The five youthful artisans were of one heart and one mind, and a sanctified friendship ripened into a bond of union broken only by death. Having tasted themselves of the heavenly manna, their souls were fired with desire that others might be made partakers of like precious faith. To this end they met for mutual improvement, and study of the Divine Word. They also sought out destitute localities, and told, to all who would listen, the story of the cross. At length the days of their servitude were ended, and the question of future duty engaged grave attention. John Edwards was senior in years, and, being under a matrimonial engagement, decided to follow his avocation as a shipwright; but to continue at the same time his loved employment of preaching the Gospel.

The others, Hercus, Wilson, McNeil and Hasty, entered the class of Robert Haldane, and pursued studies to qualify them more fully to be preachers of the Word. Three of the number became men of some note. Mr. Hercus became the highly-respected pastor of a church in Grenock; Mr. Wilson settled in Glasgow; Mr. McNeil went to Elgin, where his memory is still fragrant for worth and usefulness. Mr. Hasty carried the Gospel to the Far West in America. All have gone from the busy stage of life; and the Haldanes, too,