

# TORONTO PERIODICAL JOURNAL.

OR, WESLEYAN METHODIST.

"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—John viii. 32.

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## THE WESLEYAN METHODIST.

"When preachers of the Gospel become parties in party politics, religious warfare, the Church is weakened, and political disputes agitate even the faithful of the land. Such preachers, no matter which side they take, are no longer the messengers of glad tidings, but the standard-bearers of contention, and wasters of the heritage of Christ."—*Life of Dr. Adam Clarke.*

TORONTO, JUNE, 1845.

### THE SECRET OF MINISTERIAL SUCCESS.

"The common people heard him gladly."—

The above few words furnish no uncertain criterion of a good preacher of the Gospel, and also of good hearers. Of Him who spoke as never man spake, the above testimony is given; He had no higher object than to be understood by the common people, nor had he occasion. Some preachers have, in the pride of learning, spoken of coming down to the level of the understanding of their hearers. This is a great mistake; rather, the understanding of the preacher should rise to the level of that of their hearers, and as much above it as the knowledge and practice of the Word of God will enable them to do. The utmost exercise of the human understanding, with all the assistance of professional learning, cannot rise higher than to obtain the most simple notions of duty and interest. These notions may be somewhat clear and simple in learned minds; but it is often that they are not, and cannot be expressed in the simplest language: their very learning is deficient till they can do this—it is an incumbrance, an auxiliary of evil, in enabling such to speak indirectly. Possessing a perfect knowledge of truth, and an equally perfect knowledge of the human mind, and how to address it with effect, our Divine Redeemer exhibited himself as a pattern to all ministers of the Gospel. The effect of his preaching gives it the stamp of perfection, in that "the common people heard him gladly."

Now to preach effectually, it must be admitted that the best pattern ought to be kept in view; and the first step is, to acquire a perfect knowledge of the Truth. A perfect knowledge of the truth is impossible without the perfect practice of it. Let who will contradict, we will agree with our Methodist poet:—

Ah! what avails superior light,  
Without superior love.

The preacher, therefore, will approach his pattern in preaching in proportion to his approximation to perfect obedience to the truth. The truth being known, so as to affect the conscience, imbues the whole man, and characterises him. He therefore speaks spontaneously, in the simplest manner, and produces the clearest apprehension. This is true

eloquence; and as all minds possess a general similarity, and are constituted so as to be capable of differing least on the most essential points, it follows, that where truth is most practised it is most felt; consequently it can by such be best expressed, and is capable of exerting the sympathetic affinity for it in all other minds. Accordingly, the language of the Bible is the most simple and affecting, and most effectual in making impressions on the mind. The prophets and saints of the Bible come nearest to their Lord. They knew, heard, preached, and practised the truth, and were thoroughly independent of the world, and feared no man, though they possessed nothing; and were, by such obedience, able to appeal to God, with full confidence, while they addressed men. These remarks are calculated to show that Ministers of the Gospel ought to be men of one business: and that practice in that which they teach is absolutely necessary to ensure success to their ministry; and this practice ought not to be thought a hardship. If ministerial usefulness cannot be ensured without an entire abandonment of secular occupations, it is no greater sacrifice than is made by every professional man who attains to the highest honours of his profession. Even theatrical performers are subjected to the greatest drudgery in recitation and study; which, for most of their life, denies them the liberties that preachers of the Gospel enjoy, of mixing, without restraint, with their fellow-creatures: this drudgery is for an earthly honour only. We remember a Paganini (a celebrated violin player—a mere fiddler), who practised from eight to ten hours every day, without intermission, throughout his whole life, in addition to his public performances: this labour consumed his physical powers, and reduced him to a skeleton while living; and, no doubt, shortened his days, and would have been a sort of martyrdom in a minister of the Gospel. To them we say, do not be outdone by such; but, as you see that it is practice that is absolutely required, practice reading (Mr. Wesley says, at least four hours every morning); practice pastoral visiting; practice piety in the presence of your own family; put away the dissipating piano, whereby your daughters lose time, gain pride, and by whom your people lose a good example. Let your own life, and that of your wives and families, all make part of a living sermon: let their every act, and yours, enforce your text on the previous Sabbath, and be an exhortation to the succeeding one. If all this is not done, and much more, we are quite sure that efficiency in example will be perceived, and have its effects for evil (if the defect be ever so apparently small), more than all the most splendid ministerial talents will have for good. Simplicity of language—the language of God, and of perfection of faith, love, and obedience cannot be spoken by an unfaithful minister, however learned or talented, any more than Greek by those who never learned it.

The idea of a living sermon is suggested to us by referring to memory, as to the conduct of some of the old Methodist preachers in England, which, we believe is yet to be read there. It is seen in their general deportment: abstraction from all worldly concerns is the phyfactory on the borders of their garments, and is never belied by their conduct. It is seen, eminently, as they ascend the pulpit, reminding the observer of Moses, who, with reverential trembling, attended the mount to meet God. It is seen in pastoral visiting; for such, visit great and small, not having a few select families to visit

py their time, and to cheat them with the notion, that, while recreating with them, they are performing pastoral duty.

To conclude, the success of Ministers is ascertainable by as correct a rule as that which we are furnished with in the science of hydrostatics, namely, that water will not rise above its source; so, no more can a minister preach with effect a standard of practical religion higher than he has attained. If it is asked why there are not more revivals—more conversions, why is there not deeper piety prevalent? go to the Minister, observe his example and that of his family, and you will know all.

[We insert the following Letter and Reply,—the former being a sort of eternal exclusion of the Editor of this Journal and his family from the Wesleyan Methodist Church. We have another letter from the same angry individual, but at present we decline to publish articles that are merely personal, as being irrelevant to the object of this Journal. The reverend writer produces satisfactory testimonials of fitness to preside over the tribunal of the Inquisition. This, also, is the general opinion:—]

(PRIVATE.)

Toronto City, May 7, 1845.

To Mr. Alfred Carter.

Sir,—As I have no desire unnecessarily to expose you either before the Class in which you meet, or in any other place or manner; I adopt a mode (as I conceive) the least painful to yourself, of informing you, viz., by this letter, that I cannot consent to your longer continuance among us upon 'Trial,' in the Wesleyan Methodist Church upon the City Circuit. The reasons why, are many, and vastly more than sufficient. I will subjoin a few general facts: You cannot but remember, that some weeks ago you called upon me, and fraudulently attempted to force yourself upon me as a "member" (proper) of the Church, asserting over and over again, directly in the face of my assertions to the contrary, that you were a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. You even ventured to affirm again and again, that you had a "Ticket of Membership" from us (the Preachers of the City Circuit), and on that ground also asserted your claim to membership among us. Now, though you must have subsequently ascertained your mistake, on this last point (and I am informed by a friend of yours, that you did so soon after you left my house), yet up to this hour you have not acknowledged your error, or in any sense, taken back your very improper and grossly insulting remarks made to me, respecting what I then knew (and told you so) and what you without doubt, soon after you left me, if not before, knew to be untrue. Again, you are of course fully aware that to m. (and I presume to others also) you gave the lie to the two principal statements contained in an anonymous article signed "Truth."

Now, you know in your heart that both those statements there alluded to are as true as the Bible, as I told you at the time. With the first of the facts denied I had to do myself, as the Superintendent Minister of the Kingston Circuit; and with the second fact, the present Superintendent of the Circuit was concerned, whose voucher I have in my possession at this moment for the same. Of these stubborn facts you can have a full benefit in any manner you choose, and as public as you may desire. What then must I think of the man, who can put forth and persist, in such assertions and denials as I have referred to above? Surely I cannot conceive of him as trying to work out his Salvation, and endeavouring to flee from the wrath to come.

Once more, you have admitted to me (and also to another person) that you are the acting Editor, or writer, of the "Periodical Journal" at present issued in this City: a paper abounding in what I know to be the grossest and most shameful untruths and perversions, ever put into print by any agency, however unprincipled and vile. Now though you may not (per-