

JOHN WESLEY.

Among the figures conspicuous in the history of England in the last century there is perhaps none more worthy of careful study than that of John Wesley. Make all deductions you please for his narrowness, his self-conceit, his extravagance, and still it remains that no one so nearly approaches the fullness of stature of the great heroes of Christian spirituality in the early and Middle Ages. He had more in common with St. Boniface and St. Bernardine, of Sienna, with St. Vincent Ferrer, and Savonarola, than any religious teacher whom Protestantism has ever produced. Nor is the rise of the sect which has adopted his name—the “people called Methodists” was his way of designating his followers—by any means the most important of the results of his life and labors. It is not too much to say that he, and those whom he formed and influenced, chiefly kept alive in England the idea of supernatural order during the dull materialism and selfish coldness of the eighteenth century. To him is undoubtedly due the Evangelical party. Romaine and Newton, Venn and Jowett, Milner and Simeon, differing as they did from him on particular doctrines, derived from him that fundamental tenet of religious conversion which they termed “the new birth.” It is easy now, as it ever was, to ridicule the grotesque phraseology of the Evangelical school, to make merry over their sour superstitions, their ignorant fanaticism, to detect and pillory their intellectual littleness. It is not easy to estimate adequately the work which they did by reviving the idea of grace in the Established Church. They were not theologians, they were not philosophers, they were not scholars. Possibly only two of them, Cecil and Scott can be said to rise above a very low level of mental mediocrity. But they were men who felt the powers of the world to come in an age when that world had become to most little more than an unmean-

ing phrase; who spoke of a God to pray to in a generation which knew chiefly of one to swear by; who made full proof of their ministry by signs and wonders parallel to those of the prophetic vision. It was in truth a valley of dry bones in which the Evangelical clergyman of the opening nineteenth century was set; and as he prophesied there was a noise, and behold, a shaking, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great crowd.

A GOOD GAELIC PREACHER.—The Editor of the *Celtic Magazine*, Inverness, in describing several of our illustrious fellow-countrymen pays the following high compliment to one of them. Speaking of Rev. Alex. McLean formerly of Belfast, he says he found him “preaching to a large Gaelic congregation in the purest and most unctuous vernacular. I felt how great a pity it was that we could not have such a fine preacher, getting a good stipend at home, in place of some of those mongrel, so-called Gaelic preachers we have in many places in the Highlands of Scotland. Mr. McLean is really a first-class Gaelic preacher and uses the language with great fluency and power.”

A MOURNFUL RECORD.—The loss of life during the past year in the case of the fishing fleet sailing from Cape Ann, Mass., is entirely unprecedented in the history of that port. In the February gale 143 men were drowned. During the year 240 lives were lost, leaving 88 widows and 219 fatherless children. Since the year 1830 when the Georges’ fishing was first established there have been lost from this port 2118 men and 405 vessels valued at upwards of 1½ million dollars. A large number of men from Cape Breton and the Southern Shore are employed in this dangerous and arduous fishery.

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