

## Centennial Poem.

1784 AMERICAN METHODISM - 1884

BY REV. ALFRED L. HOPKIN.

IN seventeen hundred eighty four,  
To Lovely Lane, in Baltimore,  
With letters fresh from Wesley's pen,  
The Bishop Coke and sixty men;  
Some, bearing marks cruel mobs had made  
On cheek and brow, because they prayed,  
And huted at sin, alone, unawed,  
The red hot thunderbolts of God.  
No coward heart beat in that train—  
Time serving, trimming, soft, inane—  
The staff for sixty martyr fires  
Rode singing by the city spires.

These sixty heroes, young and strong,  
With hearts attuned to holy song,  
The vanguard of a countless host  
Illumined by the Holy Ghost,  
In General Conference gathered there,  
And saintly Coke sat in the chair.  
That twenty-fourth December morn,  
Big with the fate of souls unborn,  
The outline of a church was wrought—  
The masterpiece of Wesley's thought.  
For at that Christmas Conference then,  
Out from the hearts of sixty men  
A church was born, destined to mould  
The young Republic's life, and hold  
Her true to God, through stormy years,  
Baptized in blood and blind with tears.

The world saw as that old year died  
A people scattered far and wide  
In bands and factions, torn and rent,  
Nor ordinance nor sacrament,  
One heaving mass of discontent.  
The new year looked from heaven and saw  
A church, held by one sovereign law,  
In lines compact, North, South, East, West,  
By ordained pastors served and blest.

A Bishop, born of power divine,  
In the true apostolic line,  
His sainthood shining like a star,  
Led on the host to glorious war.  
The church for which a Wesley prayed,  
A Fletcher intercession made,  
To which a Coke gave his best years,  
And Asbury nourished with his tears—  
What could she other be than grand,  
The strength and glory of the land?

From the wilderness she came  
With eye of fire and sword of flame;  
That march of victory begun,  
Unparalleled beneath the sun.

She had no wealth, no prestige she,  
No voice of cultured melody;  
The power of God was all she knew;  
She had but rams' horns—these she blew,  
And strange, unearthly, startling tones  
Swept o'er the valleys of dry bones,  
And dead hearts with a new life beat,  
And dead men started to their feet.  
A sweet, reviving, heavenly breath,  
Rushed on the barren fields of death.  
Amazed the cultured pastors heard  
From unlearned men the mighty Word.  
They preached in barns, school-houses,  
groves,

In cottage homes, by kitchen stoves,  
And cried aloud to dying men,  
"Ye must, ye must be born again."  
They forded streams, trod pathless woods,  
Upon their backs their earthly goods;  
Their saddle-bags held to their brims  
John Wesley's prose and Charles' hymns.  
Their study was the open air,  
The horse's back their study chair;  
And so God taught them how to think  
Without the aid of pen and ink.  
The theme, by day, on horseback wrought,  
A master-piece of holy thought,  
Was preached at night in startling tones,  
And answered by the cries and groans  
Of souls in seas of anguish tossed,  
Lost, without Christ—forever lost!  
And this is how the fathers spread  
The Gospel story, sweet and dread.

Their money came in scanty doles;  
God paid their salaries in souls;  
And never men since earth was made  
Were so munificently paid.  
A soul! a soul for which Christ died,  
Standing redeemed at His dear side,  
Appeared of greater worth to them  
Than gold or glittering diadem.  
They loved, more than men love their lands,  
A great revival on their hands.  
They fasted, wept, and bowed in shame  
Before the Lord until it came,  
And seeing souls saved by the score  
Bowed down again and asked for more.  
Nothing of earthly good they craved,  
But souls they must and would have saved.  
They poured their lives for Jesus out,  
Then went to glory with a shout.  
No churches stood with stately spires  
To welcome them; no fractious choirs,

As changeful as the changing moons  
Married their hymns to godless tunes.  
They read, full-voiced, a verse or two,  
Then started in and sang them through,  
And for a rest amidst the strain  
They shouted, and sang on again.  
A poorer, happier, holier band  
Never lived this side the promised land;  
And every where they stood to preach  
A heavenly fire flashed from their speech,  
Revealing sin's eternal shame,  
The great white Throne, the lake of flame.  
And careless souls viewed with surprise  
Eternity before their eyes—  
Its heights of rest all glory crowned,  
Its depth of doom where hope is drowned,  
And straightway sought the anxious seat,  
Fell down as list at Jesus' feet;  
Then rose, redeemed, and with a shout  
Told all their new-found glory out,  
With holy ardor onward pressed  
To Beulah lands of perfect rest.  
And this is how the young church grew—  
Men were converted through and through,  
Knew just the place, the day, the hour,  
When God came down in awful power,  
Remembered all the bitter tears,  
The deep distress, the dreadful fears,  
Till Jesus stood revealed to save,  
And full and free forgiveness gave.  
And this is how the young church rose  
Superior over all her foes.  
The Pentecostal glory ran  
From heart to heart, from man to man.  
She stood a bush, a bush illumed,  
A bush on fire, and unconsumed.

Then, later, glory to her name,  
When all the land was wrapped in flame,  
And God His thundering mandate gave  
To strike the fetters from the slave,  
Her Simpson came to Lincoln's aid,  
Inspired his heart, his hands upstayed,  
When faith was dim and hope was dumb,  
Till victory came and martyrdom.  
Her pastors on the battle-field  
Beside the wounded soldiers kneeled  
When shot and shell rang through the air,  
Breathing for dying men a prayer,  
Listening for words they fain would say  
To wife and mother far away,  
And to love's longing gaze replied:  
"I'll write and tell them how you died."

Away with doubts! away with fears!  
Safe, through a hundred checkered years  
Our God hath led her people on,  
Till, lo! the tender breaking dawn  
Of a new century's morn beheld  
Her thousands into millions swelled.  
The church Coke formed in Lovely Lane,  
Too humble even for disdain,  
Homeless and friendless, priestless, bann'd  
And ostracized on every hand,  
Marching through all the earth abroad,  
The leader of the hosts of God!

If spirits aught of this world know,  
Behold above their work below—  
The harvests springing from the seeds  
That slumbered in their words and deeds—  
Can heaven a fuller joy reveal  
Than that immortal sixty feel  
To see the church for which they laid  
Their great hearts down, and wept and  
prayed,  
Standing, with college, hall, and tower,  
Supreme in numbers and in power,  
Stretching away from shore to shore  
Destined to live forevermore?

To those who stand within the veil,  
From fields of strife we cry—All hail!  
Church in the light, with crowned brow,  
The church below salutes you now!

O mighty, flaming, Holy Ghost,  
Fall on her ministerial host,  
Crown them with more than mortal power  
The tongue of fire, love's awful dower—  
A zeal that never weary grows,  
A faith that bright and brighter glows,  
A might in prayer the fathers knew—  
O sanctify us, through and through,  
And make our spirits clean and sweet,  
And blow the chaff out from the wheat,  
And purge Thy tree from branch to root,  
That it may bear more, better fruit;  
And in the century now begun,  
Bless every land beneath the sun!

THE sense of sight is injured by alcohol. It is a well-known result of excess in drinking that the drunken man "sees double." This is, however, due to the action of alcohol on the muscles which move the eye, in consequence of which the two eyes do not move together as in a sober state.

## The Closing Incident.

THERE was something unconsciously dramatic and touching in this incident, which took place at the close of the Centenary Conference love-feast. Gen. Clin on B. Fisk was speaking within the chancel, with Dr. McFerrin sitting by him. Pacing his hand on the Doctor's shoulder he said:

"It will take two hours for me to tell all that is crowding upon my heart. This meeting is the remarkable hour of my life. First, I am happy in the Lord, I am glad I am a Methodist. I am glad to see the work of this meeting. It will be twenty years in a few months since, when at the close of the 'great struggle,' when the smoke and flame had died away, to my quarters in Nashville, where I was clothed with more responsibility than generally comes to me, or than I desired, there came two men; one of them was J. B. McFerrin and the other was A. L. P. Green. At the mention of the last name how many hearts throb with gratitude to God that ever such a good man lived. We sat down and talked together, and the talk was a religious one. We talked about Methodism—not about organic union just then, but about a better state of things and about fraternity. And I said to him, 'Do you think the time will ever come when there shall be a better state of feeling?' and this good old man turned to me and said: 'Why, bless you, you will see them all sitting down together in a love-feast yet,' and here we are. I was in a difficult place, and with most difficult work on my hands, out there in that portion of the country, and from the President down no man ever gave me so much help in my perplexing work and trying position as this good man upon whose shoulders my hand now rests."

With deep feeling the Conference then sang:

Together let us sweetly live,  
Together let us die,  
And each a starry crown receive  
And reign above the sky.

## Always at School.

MICHAEL ANGELO was one of the great artists of Italy. One day, when old and feeble, he was found walking among the ruins of Rome. "Where are you going?" he was asked. "To school," said the old artist, "to try to learn something."

This brief reply showed the nature of the man and the secret of his great success. Though he lived to old age, yet he was never too old to learn. His great genius was linked to industry, and therefore he was able to enrich the world with so many works of art. His mind was active, and his hand busy, until death closed his long and glorious career.

Many boys and girls are anxious to get through their school-days, and do something in the world. They say their lessons are hard and dry, and they chafe under the restraints of the school-room. Nor must we censure them too harshly. The life of a student is not all sweetness, but there are some bitter drops in the cup, and it is a pleasant moment when school-days are numbered. It is sad to part with loved school-mates; it is pleasant to be out in the world, and to feel that you are to some degree your own master.

But what we want to say is this—do not cease to learn. Use your eyes and ears, and do not let any rust

gather on your mind to dull the bright polish which school has given it. The world is a school, and he must be either a prodigy or a dunce who cannot be taught by it. Contact with others, in business and in social life, may teach us, and if we know how we may extract some information from all kinds of people, as bees get honey from all kinds of flowers. To the real student the world is a school, and increasing years bring increasing wisdom.

Keep up your habit of reading, and if you read many books be sure to study a few. Above all, let the Bible be your daily guide, and let its lessons be the lessons of your daily life.

## That Light!

Ho, ho, keeper of the light-house at the bar!

The night is coming—coming so black—and the breakers are roaring. Is your lamp, in the tower above, trimmed and burning? Some sailors on the lonely, cruel, wrecking sea will be looking for your light.

Ho, ho, children!

Are you children of the light, following the Saviour? Then, with your prayers, your kind words, your pure lives, you are God's light-house at the bar. Let the lamp be trimmed, and then let it shine, shine all the time, sending out the light of a true, pure example. Some poor fellow may be guided by you into a harbour of safety.

## Nelson's Famous Signal.

SOME correspondence has recently been published as to the exact words of Nelson's famous signal at the battle of Trafalgar. Mr. J. W. Thompson, grandson of the lieutenant who actually gave the signal, writes from Cardiff to a daily contemporary: "What actually happened before the action was this: The admiral gave the order to telegraph to the whole fleet—'Nelson expects every man to do his duty.' This order was given, not to the signalling-lieutenant of the *Victory*—who had been disabled, I believe—but to my grandfather, the late George Lewis Browne, who was then serving on board the flag-ship. My father had more than once heard him relate the incident which then occurred—the young lieutenant's suggestion, half hint, half request, that 'Erg' should be substituted, as that word was in the signal code-book, and could be run up at once, whereas 'Nelson' would require six sets of flags, displayed one after the other, and Nelson's prompt and hearty reply, 'Right, Browne; that's better!' This officer was paid off, as were so many others, in consequence of the war being virtually ended, so far as naval operations were concerned, by the victory of Trafalgar, and it was while he was practising as a barrister on the Western Circuit that he got his promotion as commander. Long afterward he was given post-rank. I have once or twice seen a curiously-garbled version of this little bit of history, in which Nelson is made to carefully adapt his words on this occasion to the requirements of writers of popular songs."

Dr. PECK has stated that a caravan of eighty-two crossed the great African desert from Algeria to Timbuctoo; sixty-seven drank liquors and wines to ward off disease. Arriving at Timbuctoo, all were taken sick; sixty-six of the sixty-seven died, while every one of the fifteen total abstainers survived.