

# The Wesleyan.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

REV. J. LATHEEN.

In my last communication, I referred to Conference matters and to some dignitaries of Conference. It may be interesting to some of your readers to know something of another class of men—men to whom the Methodism of the British Isles is greatly indebted. At Gilsland, a somewhat famous watering place, renowned in the days of Mosstroopers, and familiar to the readers of Sir Walter Scott, I listened morning and evening to a most fervent and powerful local preacher. He is comparatively a young man, one of the wealthy landed proprietors of the north—was formerly an ardent sportsman. Upon his conversion to God a complete change was effected. Piles of trashy novels, in which he had taken great delight, were committed to the flames; wines and spirits, with which his cellars were stocked, were emptied into the fish-pond; hunters and hounds sent away, convivial parties given up, and his wealth consecrated to God. To the great mortification of some members of his family, he not only united in the membership of the Methodist Church, but gathers his servants and dependents to service in his hall; and devotes his Sabbaths to preaching Christ, with earnestness and power—in his own and the adjoining circuits. In my early life the famous and fervent Squire Brooks, whose conversion and life-work were very much the same, was the popular evangelist of these northern counties. May the noble succession be long and worthy perpetuated!

Recently I had the privilege of listening to a most excellent sermon, on the preaching of "Christ crucified," from one of the younger local preachers of English Methodism. He comes of a good stock. His father was a power in the local ranks, his grandfather as the superintendent minister of the circuit put my name on the "preacher's plan;" and two of his uncles, if not more, are estimable ministers of our own church in the Province of Ontario. This young man has recently been subjected to a sore and trying ordeal. Believing himself called to the work of the Christian ministry, he was unanimously recommended by the Newcastle District meeting, and passed the July examination with acceptance. In consequence of the pressure of hard times on circuit funds, and also of the surplus of candidates, the condition of admission by Conference became exceedingly stringent. Quite a number recommended by the Committee were refused by the Conference. Amongst them were several evidently promising young men. In culture, physique and preaching power, as far as I could judge, the young man who preached to us on Sunday last possesses all the requirements for becoming a most acceptable minister. How I have wished that we had a few more open doors for the admission of such men to our Canadian work! It was remarked by one of the veterans of the British Conference that at a former period, when a similar pressure had been experienced, many good and gifted men, refused by the committee and Conference, had been lost to the Methodist Church. Surely there is yet room for all who Christ calls to his work.

Last week being at Newcastle, I took advantage of an opportunity, then offered, of getting a glance at church work from another standpoint. A garden party for bazaar purposes was announced to be held in the spacious and beautiful grounds at Elswick House—the residence of Mr. Stephenson, ex-Mayor of Newcastle. The affair was regarded as a financial success. It did not strike me as at all equal in attractiveness of arrangement to the several exhibitions of a similar kind, held in the beautiful grounds of the late Judge Wilmot at Fredericton. There was one feature, however, of unique interest. The names of two gentlemen of great distinction were announced to take part in the proceedings. Both these men are what is called self-made. Both of them began life as pitmen in the collieries of the north. Both have given evidence of almost unrivalled abilities of a special kind. Sir Geo. Elliott, one of these, is now a member of Parliament, Baronet of the realm, proprietor of several collieries and other extensive public works, and probably one of the richest men in England. The prestige of the popular Baronet's name, though quite an acquisition, was scarcely equal however to that of his associate Rev. Peter McKenzie—the Methodist preacher. Sir George, who very likely regretted inability to make the most of a favorable opportunity for meeting his constituents, did not make his appearance. But Peter attended to his lecture on "Job the Patriarch of Uz," was at his post. To give any adequate idea of the lecture as I listened to him, from a cart, placed on a retired part of the lawn, or of the effect produced, would be out of question. I should suppose that it were possible to take two men of the stamp and calibre of Peter Cartwright and Dewitt Talmage, with some of the power and peculiarities of Dr. Parker of the London Temple Pulpit, and in some mental crucible to fuse them into one, the result might possibly be something in the direction of this extraordinary effort. To early education the Rev. Peter McKenzie owes nothing. He was married, and had achieved notoriety of another kind before his conversion to

God. Under such circumstances only the possession of rare and singular gifts would have justified his acceptance by the Conference. It has been said Wm. Arthur, who had incidentally listened to him as a local preacher, impressed by the evidence of a marvellous genius sanctified by grace, won for him the recognition of Conference—abundantly justified by subsequent service. He was sent to the Institution for a course of training in literature and theology. But the pithy preacher was out of his element in the classroom. The drill and discipline of study was too irksome to be borne. When grammatical difficulties, and the other perquisites to be encountered by the student in the laborious path of intellectual inquiry, had gathered up around Peter, he was accustomed to propose a prayer-meeting as the solution. It was no use to aim at polish. The ordinary road to knowledge he could not travel. The diamond was in the rough, but there was no doubt in regard to the quality, and the process by which it was to be beautified might possibly prove injurious. Wisely it was decided to open his way at once to chosen work. Though setting at defiance all rhetorical rules, being altogether a law unto himself; yet Mr. McKenzie shows an intimate acquaintance with the best authorities upon the subject. Evidently he has been a hard student in his own way, and for him, unquestionably, that way is best. The lack of originality of ideas, replete with wit, sarcasm, rising at times to strains of beautiful and genuine eloquence, produced a great excitement upon that "Canny" Newcastle audience. I have heard several platform men of considerable distinction, on both sides of the Atlantic; but if the choice were given to listen to one of them once for all, then commend me, with my North of England associates, to the Rev. Peter McKenzie. I found him exceedingly genial, as one might expect, and he made sure that I should have an introduction to the most prominent men on the ground.

In this town of Newcastle, where several of my friends reside, and on the river Tyne, to which it largely owes its celebrity, are several points and places of interest to which I intended to refer. My space, however, is nearly exhausted; and I am not sure but I may be trespassing upon the patience of your readers. In the journals of Mr. Wesley are several references to this metropolis of the North—then less shadowed by the smoke of chemical and other works. Under date June 4th, 1759, John Wesley writes: "I rode on to Newcastle. Certainly I did not believe that there is another world, I would spend all my summers here, as I know no place in Great Britain comparable to it for pleasantness. But I seek another country, and am content to be a wanderer upon earth."

The *doric* speech of the Newcastle people was not long ago a distinctive peculiarity; but education and travel by rail are removing landmarks of vocabulary and pronunciation. Lord Eldon, of whose name and fame the Newcastle people were so proud, had the "burr" and shewed it to perfection when, as Lord Chancellor, and representative of Majesty, he was called upon to prorogue Parliament. I have heard Dr. Punshon say that he could detect this *doric* in the most educated men of Newcastle.

One of the largest establishments on the Tyne, and in the world, of the kind, is that of Messrs. Palmer & Co., at Jarrow, on the right bank of the Tyne, below Newcastle. The whole process of ship-building can there be seen; and as a brother-in-law of my own holds the principal position under the firm, there was easy access; and every facility for seeing the several departments—turnarounds, rolling mills, engine shops, and shipyards, in advantage. The iron in the ore is brought, first of all, from the Company's Cleveland mines. In the stupendous furnaces at Jarrow the ore is smelted, and run into bars. Then from other furnaces the molten malleable masses of iron are passed through rollers and shaped into sheets, plates, and bars, of required size. In adjoining factories the engines are made. On the stocks, at the time of my visit, in various stages of construction, and amongst them some of immense tonnage, were some ten or twelve iron ships. It was impossible not to feel, in passing through the midst of thousands of workmen, and of machinery upon so stupendous a scale, that here was touched one of the springs of national greatness. Scarcely in this department can the operations of any other country hope to rival those of the Tyne and the Clyde.

In less than a week I hope to be fairly embarked for Canada and home.

I have been amused with the interest which America, and Canada, especially, as a domain of the British Empire, has for various classes of English people. They wonder if the supplies of cattle and grain, brought over to English markets, can possibly hold out. Would it not soon be exhausted? Very eager have been the inquiries as to the estimate formed in Canada of the Marquis of Lorne, and his Royal wife, the accomplished Princess Louise, at Featherstone Haugh Castle, the seat of one of the country families, where I had occasion to call yesterday, this was a personal inquiry.

August 23, '79.

## SORROW.

Do you say, what are we to do with sorrow when it comes? We know we must conquer circumstances, and that they do not touch our life, only the externals of it. Still, weeping is bitter, pain is humbling, reproach is sharp, disappointment stings, and the death of friends no medicine can heal. Sooner or later the days of darkness will come. Where is joy then? I reply, you must remember that word of Christ, "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy." It was the Resurrection that did that for them. It is the resurrection that shall do that for us. To accept sorrow as part of our predestined obedience, to endure sorrow as the testimony of our faith made perfect, to interpret sorrow as a blessed share in the incompleting Passion, to welcome sorrow as a claim for the power of the Resurrection—here is the secret which, if it does not bring back friends, feeds in us the hope of meeting them; if it does not assuage pain, dignifies us with the fellowship of Christ. In manhood and age, reasonable and exulting; in youth, so strange to sorrow, and so new to it, it has a pathos and beauty of its own quite irresistible. My young brethren, you especially who firmly believe in Christ, and who secretly desire to imitate and glorify Him, the joy of action is noble, but the joy of suffering is divine. Welcome the life He gives you, drink the gladness He offers you. He is wiser than us all, and will choose the best for us. Still, if He should call you to drink of His cup—the cup of His sorrow, and to be baptized with His baptism, the baptism of His death, do not think Him hard with you, rather that He puts honor on you. Even in its undimmed brightness and vigor, Christian youth is ever a great force in the world, which cannot dispute its sincerity or evade its appeal. But when strength is made perfect in weakness, and by the sick-bed or the death-bed of a young Christian man, the passing world with all its fresh delights and opening prospects is calmly and steadily postponed—the life to come—the victory that overcomes the world is then seen in the silent judgment that passes on the heart is this—"Jesus Christ is here."—Good Words.

## HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE.

"Ye are my witnesses," saith the Lord. We are not God's logicians, sent to argue men into the kingdom of heaven. We are not God's debaters, sent to discuss theology with men, and to convince them of the truth of Christianity. If this were so, we might well fear of getting worsted; for the world is full of good logicians and skilled debaters—men that are more than a match for us on their ground. We, on the contrary, as Christ's servants, are simply to bear witness year in and year out; using the Word of God, and not our own. And our success will not depend upon our acuteness, or our eloquence, or our skill, but upon God's Spirit, that accompanies and energizes that Word. It takes a strong muscle to throw a handball so that it shall strike a hard ball; but a child can fire a rifle-ball effectively, since the propelling force is in the powder and not in the muscle. So it takes a strong man to use an argument effectively; but a babe in Christ can use a text of Scripture with prevailing force, since it is, not by might nor by power, but by God's Spirit that that text is to be impelled. "The power of a word," says Emerson, "depends upon the power of the man that stands behind it." But the power of God's word depends upon the power of the Spirit that stands behind it, its inspirer and its abiding energizer.

We remember of looking at a bronze figure that stood in a public place, in whose lifted hand one of the city lamps was raised aloft to give light to the passers by. There it stood, in storm and in calm, under beating rain and driving wind, in mute fidelity to its trust, holding forth the light for all men. "That," I said, "is a picture of what a Christian should be—a patient, undaunted, undisturbed torch-bearer for Christ." If a courage of ridicule or opposition should chance to break upon him, he is to stand in staid indifference to it all, holding forth the word of life. If blasts of ridicule dash him in the face, he is to take it as silently and as imperturbably as the bronze figure takes the tempests. It is the men that stand who move the world. Hence the Scriptures are full of exhortations on this point. "Stand, therefore, with your loins girded about," etc. Of course there are other texts which enjoin activity and aggressive effort. But if a Christian's activities must go abroad, his example must stay at home. As a living witness for Christ, men must know where to find him every hour of the day. And while his feet are swift to rush in the way of God's commandments, his example must be as fixed and immovable as a light-house. "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life."

## LEARNING TO SAVE.

The first thing to be learned by a boy or young man, or anybody else having the ambition to become a useful member of society, is the habit of saving. No matter if a boy or girl has wealthy parents, each should learn to save, if for no other reason than that riches are well known to "take to themselves wings and fly away." Few are so well to do as to be secure against poverty and want. The children of the wealthy classes are often miserably poor; while men of large means have commenced life without other advantages than habits of industry coupled with the disposition to save. It is especially important that children of people in moderate circumstances and of the poor should learn to take care of the money they get. A boy who is earning two shillings, three shillings, or more a day should manage to save a portion of it if possible. If he can lay by only one shilling a week, let him save that. It doesn't amount to much, it is true, but it is worth saving; it is better saved than wasted—better saved than thrown away for tobacco or beer, or any other worthless or useless article or object. But the best thing about it is that the boy who saves two shillings a week on a very meagre salary acquires a habit of taking care of his money which will be of the utmost value to him. The reason why working men as a class do not get ahead faster, are not more independent, is that they have never learned to save their earnings. It does not matter whether a man receives a salary of five shillings a day or a pound, if he gets rid of it all during the week, so that there is nothing left on Saturday night, he will not get rich very rapidly. He will never have much ahead. But the individual who receives five shillings per day, and is able to save a shilling, or the one getting a pound, who is careful to lay by five shillings, is laying up something for a rainy day. Young people who expect to labor with their hands for what they may have of this world's goods, who have no ambition or wish to become professional men, office-holders, or speculators, should by all means acquire habits of economy, learn to save. So surely as they do this, so surely will they be in a position to ask no special favors. Every man wants to learn to look out for himself, to rely upon himself. Every man needs to feel that he is the peer of every other man, and he cannot do this until he has learned to save. This is the first lesson to be learned, and the youth who cannot master it will never have anything. He will be a dependent.

"When I think of God, even little as we know of His works in thus creating me, I am lost in amazement and astonishment. Eternity! None can explain it. Back! unroll your cycles when the earth was born; further, when the first orb sprang into being, and think of the ages! Were there but one orb created in a million of years, there had been time from the beginning of all these worlds that deck our heavens. And when I think of unlimited space, and know no reason why God should fill one part more than another; when I think of space without boundary, on, and on, and on, further than thought can travel, and think of God as filling that universe with worlds of majesty, all of which move as to a hair's breadth in space and to an instant of time, according to His eternal purposes, keeping step to His word and singing His praise, my soul is lost and overwhelmed, and I would join with the seraphim in crying out, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of Hosts."—Simpson.

Hear is a good rule for conversation with others. Never tell a person anything concerning himself, nor report to him anything which others have said of him, or of his doings or possessions, which you think will not give him pleasure. There is, of course, an exception to this rule when you feel it an imperative duty to state an unpleasant truth to another for his substantial good; but in that case you ought to approach the subject so cautiously, and speak of it so tenderly, as to show him, beyond a question, that it is a positive pain to you to be a cause of his discomfort. Never call it frankness, never look upon it as a playful way of speaking, for you to blurt out to him your own or other people's opinions which are likely to lessen his enjoyment in the thought of what he is, or what he has, or of what he has done. There is a great deal of cruel unkindness in this line, on the part of those who would never dream that they could properly be called cruelly unkind.

## METHODISM IN BYGONE DAYS.

ORIGIN OF METHODISM IN STAFFORDSHIRE.

John Wesley's first recorded visit was paid to Birmingham in March, 1738. At that time the Oxford Fellow had not commenced his career as an Evangelist, but the depth and sincerity of his religious convictions were evident even then by his conscience being troubled, after he had left, that he had not spoken godly words to those who had waited upon him at the inn. Early in 1739, following the example of Whitefield, he preached for the first time in the open fields; but four years elapsed before he again visited the neighbourhood. His name by this time had become notorious, and Methodist societies had been established in London, Bristol, and several other places. In January, 1743, he visited Wednesbury, Evesham, and Stratford-on-Avon. His first sermon in Staffordshire was preached in Wednesbury Town Hall, from the words, "This is the covenant which I will make," &c., after which he adjourned to a hall "not half a mile from the town," capable of holding four or five thousand persons, and preached from the text, "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink." The immediate result of this visit was the creation of a small society of about thirty members. Persecution, the result of religious riots, speedily followed, and in July he rode from London to "Francis Ward at Wednesbury," and from thence to "Councillor Littleton, at Tanworth," to see if legal redress could not be obtained for his persecuted people from "rebels against God and the King." Three months later he rode from Bristol to Wednesbury preaching on the way at Evesham, in Quinton Church, to a "thin dull congregation." Arrived at Wednesbury he preached at noon "in a ground near the middle of the town," to a far larger congregation than was expected, from "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever." In the afternoon while writing at Francis Ward's an angry multitude from Darlaston surrounded the house, shouting, "Bring out the minister; we will have the minister!" The fearless Evangelist at once stepping out among them, and mounting a chair quietly inquired, "What do any of you want with me?" "We want you to go with us to the justice," was the reply. "That I will," said Wesley, "with all my heart. Shall we go to-night or in the morning?" "To-night, to-night," cried the crowd, and immediately Wesley led the way, followed by two or three hundred of the people, the rest returning whence they came. Bentley Hall, the residence of Mr. Lane, J. P., being reached, inquiries were made as to the charge. "Why, an't please you, they sing psalms all day; nay, and make folks rise at five in the morning, what would your Worship advise us to do?" "To go home," said Mr. Lane, "and be quiet." From Bentley Hall, the crowd led Wesley to the house of Mr. Justice Persehouse, at Walsall. The justice refused to see them. Thus baffled, they resolved to take Mr. Lane's advice and go home, and were about to do so, when a Walsall mob met them, and a free fight ensued, the Walsall roughs striving to get hold of Wesley and the Darlaston roughs endeavouring to defend him. The Walsall men won the day, and Wesley was left in their hands. Seizing him they dragged him along with rude violence, shouting on every side, "A way with him! Kill him at once! Knock his brains out!" In this emergency help came from "Honest Munchin," an Amazonian woman of Darlaston, who, swearing that none should touch him, knocked down, at the peril of her own life, three or four of his assailants; also from the ringleader of the mob, who, suddenly turning, said in respectful tones, "Sir, I will spend my life for you; follow me, and not one soul here shall hurt a hair of your head." Thus championed from unexpected quarters, Wesley providentially escaped safely to Wednesbury, having lost, he says, "only one of my hands."

A few days later the following magisterial proclamation was published by it, which will be seen, the very justices who had refused to deal with Wesley when carried before them by the crowd:

To all High Constables, Petty Constables, &c. Whereas we, His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the county of Stafford, have received information that several disorderly persons, styling themselves Methodist preachers, go about raising riots and disturbances, to the great damage of His Majesty's peace and against the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King:

These are, in His Majesty's name, to command you and every one of you within your respective districts to make diligent search after the said Methodist preachers, to bring them before some of us, His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, to be examined concerning their unlawful doings.

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