

FROM A SCOTCH CORRESPONDENT.

RICHARD WEAVER.

Of the great religious movement, begun in Ireland, contemporaneously with a similar awakening in America in the autumn of 1857, and in Scotland and England a year or so later, volumes have already, and volumes more probably will be written, and yet only a tithe be told. Of the characteristics of the Revival; the intolerable burden following the conviction of sin,—crushing soul and body, and overwhelming the heart with an agony inexpressible; the fearful horror and sad sense of being ruined and undone; and of the physical features, phenomena, and mental processes exhibited by the powerless and paralyzed one, much similar to that which took place in the days of Wesley and Whitfield, and of the other external features which mark this great movement, it is not mine to speak. These may be left to persons competent to form an opinion on such matters, and not hesitant to express it.

One feature—not the least conspicuous one—which has hitherto marked this great awakening, is the number of zealous and energetic lay preachers who have come forth,—some from the higher ranks of society, and others from the lowest, and through whose agency, humanly speaking, it has been, and is being, throughout the length and breadth of Britain and Ireland, daily and nightly promoted and advanced. And, not to mention the names and labors of Messrs. Brownlow North, Gordon Furlong, an Aberdeen advocate, and T. Shierdane Henry, a Dublin barrister, the three most prominently before the public, and whose labors have been most abundant, we have Richard Weaver, the converted collier and prize fighter; Reginald Radcliffe, a Liverpool lawyer and accomplished gentleman, and William Carter, once a master sweep in London. A brief sketch of the life and labors of the first named of these self-sacrificing evangelists—gleaned from his recently published biography, and partly the result of personal observation—may not be uninteresting; and, if time permits, a notice of the latter mentioned gentleman also.

Richard Weaver, then, was born in the summer of 1827 at a mining village named Asterley, not very far from Shrewsbury. His father was a day laborer, a wretched, drunken profligate, and as his son grew up to manhood he walked in his father's ways, and followed but too closely in the same evil courses. His mother, however, "the old woman down in Shropshire, whose loving heart ever yearned over her prodigal boy," was a very different person, and for five and twenty long years did not cease to pray for and intercede with him to abandon his wicked ways with all the energy of a mother's love, her expression towards him ever being, "I will never give thee up, my boy!" This is one of the

saddest and most sickening portions of Weaver's life; and from it in his sermons he draws some of his most touching and feeling allusions. And few, I think, can hear, unmoved, him depict, with a painful minuteness, a reckless, reprobate youth, coiling his fingers in the grey hairs of a mother, and thus shaking and threatening to murder her while on her bended knees interceding for him. And then, when the feelings of his audience are wound up to the highest pitch of intensity, suddenly add, "Thank God that lad is here before you to-night, and his name is Richard Weaver!" At an early age he entered the coal pits, and soon after this period he dates the commencement of his downward course "taking to drinking and fighting with other lads; frequenting balls and dances; and spending his nights in drunken revelry with spirits more wicked than himself. Growing worse as he grew older, he struck down his mother to the earth; and determining to get quit forever of her hateful tears and entreaties, left Asterley and removed to Biddulph in Staffordshire, where "flinging the reins on the neck of his sins," he gave himself up to wildest wassail, riot, and harlotry. This continued for several years, during which he committed fearful excesses, and to terminate his miserable existence the temptations of the river and the razor were not unfelt by him. But now a new and brighter era dawns in his history. Early in 1852 he removed from Biddulph and went to live with his brother George, also a miner, and local preacher in connection with the Primitive Methodists. As a pugilist, he was, it is said, never beaten, and while lying one night in bed revolving in his mind an intended fight, his brother returned from meeting, and Richard overheard his wife enquire what the text had been, to which he replied "what shall I do then?" Job xxxi., 14. "I rehearsed this over in my mind," says Richard, "and I thought there must be something more than that, and I rehearsed it thus:" "what then shall I do when God rises up in judgment against me?" and I thought "if I die now, hell will be my doom." Two sleepless nights and two weary comfortless days followed: *Drink* must drown these horrid memories and upbraidings. And drink he did. It is not for me to speak of his lonely conflicts in the coal-pits, sunless caves, and other places to which he betook himself—they are described in the opening pages of Bunyan's *Immortal Allegory*. But Richard Weaver at that time experienced a great change, and became an altered man; hating the things which he had formerly loved, and loving the things which he had formerly detested. Meekly submitting to many persecutions, and patiently bearing the jeering ridicule of his old companions. And though an unconquered prize-fighter, yet, when by his fellow-workmen—as was several times the case "smitten on the one cheek, turning the other also." For nearly four years he