

THE SILENT YEARS AT NAZARETH.

The sacred records of the birth and infancy of our Saviour are comparatively ample, but of the period of his life which elapsed between these and the time when the holy chronicles resume the thread of narrative, at the commencement of his ministry, the inspired writings are silent.

Only one flower has been thrown over the wall of the hidden garden, and beyond that our whole knowledge of the childhood and youth of Our Lord is summed up in the one short verse: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man."

But the one graphic memento to which we allude affords a glimpse over the whole unrevealed life of the child-Saviour, and in harmony therewith we can catch the echo of the silent years at Nazareth. "The occasion is the yearly celebration of the passover, when the people gathered from the remotest corners of Palestine 'to go up to Jerusalem,' at the great Jewish festival. Every year had witnessed the departure of a little band from the village of Nazareth, and now, when He had reached his twelfth year, Jesus was accompanying his parents for the first time to the beautiful City, the glory and pride of every Jewish heart.

We can imagine how he looked forward to this journey and how eagerly his pure, lovely imaginings must have anticipated the delight of this first visit to the glorious temple, the especial object of national reverence and veneration. And so it was, when the feast was over and the immense multitude that thronged the city began to melt away, and as the various bands separated for their homeward march, that Jesus, forgetful of the flight of time, or, more correctly, mindful of its preciousness, lingered still within the sacred limit of the House of Prayer, and engaged in deep and earnest conversation with the learned Doctors. Here, after they had gone a day's journey without missing him and then returned in search of him, his parents at length found him. His suggestive response to his mother's reproachful enquiry, recalling to her memory the recognition of his divine heritage, for a moment opens to us his filial love, his child-like sense of duty, evidencing that, although yet so young, already he had risen above the great class of those who drift on through life without once stopping to ask the object of their existence.

"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business." Do not these words show that He realized even in boyhood the God-appointed life work entrusted to him, and which was to be the business of his life to accomplish: that through all the years of childhood, as well as during his riper age, He never for a moment lost sight of the great truth thus enunciated. It was the exhaustless subject of his language and his teaching, and pealed itself forth finally when, his teaching and his life alike ended, he bowed his head on the cross and exclaimed, "It is finished."

But careful and reverent students of the Scriptures have been able to trace, faintly it is true, but still to trace somewhat further a few characteristics of the simple home-life of Nazareth. We know among whom he grew up and what influences surrounded him in that home: the gentle, humble, holy mother who watched with such loving devotion over his early years, and whose love he returned with all the depth of his divine nature, held doubtless the greatest and best influence over him. The village of Nazareth too was one of the loveliest spots in the world, nestled between hills over whose heads the snowy summit of Mount Hermon towered; it was a fit place for the study of the three great books that lay open to his inspection; nature, the bible and man; the latter more easily read in a small community than in a larger, in a country town or village than in a great city. In the former the virtues and vices and the idiosyncrasies even of the inhabitants are thoroughly canvassed. Nazareth, though beautifully situated, was a notoriously wicked place, affording but too ample opportunity to the youthful, stainless student to become personally cognizant of sin with its entail of misery; and so aptly did he read, mark, and learn that it was subsequently said of him: "that he needed that none should testify of man for he knew what was in man."

The scholastic education of the boy was probably very limited, but the perfection of his faculties compensated for this. He mastered two languages, the one the great religious, the other the great scientific tongue of the age, Hebrew and Greek, whilst the language in which He conversed with the common people was Aramaic. The later of the silent years, spent by our Lord in His native village, would probably be devoted to His putative father's trade, since in one of the gospels it is recorded that, astonished at the mighty and wonderful works and words he wrought and spoke, his neighbors, in the course of His subsequent ministry, demanded, "Is not

this the carpenter?" and the fact that Joseph is not mentioned in any of the later annals of the life of Christ is supposed to indicate that he died during the boyhood, or at least before the public entry of the Saviour on His work, thus leaving the care and maintenance of the mother, brothers and sisters to the youthful Jesus. How faithfully and lovingly He discharged this duty we may conceive as well as gather from His last words in reference to His mother, when, hanging on the cross, he committed her to the care of the best loved disciple, and from that hour that disciple took her to his own home. There is something peculiarly significant in the fact that from amongst all the conditions of human life God chose for His son that of a working man. It raised the standard of work for ever, and stamped the common toils and handicraft of men with honor.

H. G. B.

[The above has been handed us by a friend as part of an essay by a young lady of sixteen. It certainly is most creditable.—Ed.]

HANTSPOUR MISSION.

Aware of the fact that intelligence from Circuits or Missions is always welcome to a place in the columns of THE WESLEYAN, I beg leave to avail myself of the privilege, and forward some statements respecting the present state of Methodism in this interesting and prosperous town.

Its history here, which I shall not now review, dates back but a few years, but in Falmouth, one of my preaching places, it is about 100 years old. In the other two places, Mount Denson and Lockhartville, Methodism has been known nearly half that time. The distance from Falmouth to Lockhartville is about ten miles; it is therefore a compact field of labor, involving much less travelling than most of our Missions or Circuits. It is situated on the banks of the beautiful Avon, and comprises much agricultural scenery, which is greatly admired by travellers. The people are kind and hospitable, as Nova Scotians generally are; and though but few are wealthy, yet not many are very poor. There is a fair share of intelligence and morality among us, but genuine piety is rather scarce.

There are but two churches in Hantsport town, Baptist and Methodist, with an occasional sermon from a Presbyterian minister. The Baptists exceed in numbers all other denominations united.

A few years ago the Methodists, though a small people, attempted and succeeded in building a very superior Mission-house; but not very accurately estimating the cost, or expecting too largely from friends, when it was finished it was found necessary to place upon it that ugly-looking ornament called a mortgage. The removal of this encumbrance is the chief design of this communication. We are trying to lift this Mission into independence, convinced that it has been long enough seeking assistance from the Missionary Fund. But this cannot be done while the heavy debt remains on the Parsonage. A recent effort to reduce the liability was made by the writer, but owing to back interest not much was accomplished in lessening the principal.

Throughout the Mission there seems to be a desire, especially among the ladies, to make a bold effort to remove the pressing encumbrance. With this desirable object in view, a Tea-meeting and Sale is appointed to be held in Hantsport on the 11th of October next. We sincerely invite and fondly anticipate a general and generous response from the public. If any of you cannot come to the gathering we shall be happy to receive some token of your goodwill in the form of saleable articles, or kind words accompanied with money. Whatever may be sent to the address of G. O. H. or J. A. Taylor, Esq., will be thankfully received and faithfully appropriated.

We wish it to be distinctly understood that the people here are willing to do according to their ability, but we have among us neither the numbers nor the wealth to meet the emergency, or we would not make this appeal.

I regret, Mr. Editor, that this correspondence is not of a more encouraging and pleasing character, but there is hope that it will be so after the tea-meeting. G. O. H.

Hantsport, Aug. 27, 1883.

TRURO CIRCUIT.

Nine weeks ago, our greatly respected Pastor, the Rev. S. B. Dunn, left Truro to visit once more the good old folks at home and to revel for a season among the scenes of his childhood, so dear to his heart. In the interim, under an engagement made by himself, his ministerial work has been performed by the Rev. Leander Daniell, a Divinity Student of Sackville College, and a young preacher of much promise. During his short stay Mr. Daniell has gained a good

reputation as a pulpit and platform speaker, but what is of more consequence, he has done good work for the Master and his labors in Truro have not been in vain in the Lord. One person has experienced a saving knowledge of Christ from his clear and forcible exposition of the word of God, while several professors of religion have expressed themselves as having been built up in their most holy faith, and the church generally has been blessed.

The conducting of the service of prayer in our Vestry, last evening, terminated Mr. Daniell's labors in Truro. It was a season of unusual interest, and the audience for the time of year, was large. He improved the occasion by a most appropriate and affecting tribute to the life work and character of his late fellow-student and co-labourer in the Gospel field—the pious, zealous and devoted Stevens, word of whose death recently fell like a pall upon the Methodist Church of Canada in this Province, and who is now realizing, in the language of the Poet, that—

"There is more life, more light, more love beyond."

At the close of the meeting, Dr. W. E. McRobert, as a slight mark of appreciation of the value of Brother Daniell's labors in Truro, on the part of several members of the congregation, handed that gentleman a sealed envelope, said to contain a handsome sum of money, which pleasing duty might have fallen to the lot of the writer, were he not regarded as belonging to that class so well characterized by Boland Hill, when he preached to the people of Wapping.

Mr. Daniell, not expecting such consideration on the part of the people, in an impromptu acknowledgement, very happily worded, took occasion to express his warm thanks to persons of all Denominations in Truro for the many acts of kindness he had received at their hands which had made his short stay one of great enjoyment, which in future years he would look back upon as an oasis in the wilderness of life.

This morning he left for Sackville College, to resume his studies there. In closing I wish to convey the thanks of our Church to the Clergymen who have very kindly consented to take the balance of Mr. Dunn's appointments till his return, probably not dreaming of the difficulty of following in the wake of a man like "Daniell." The return of Mr. Dunn is looked forward to by his congregation with great interest. With improved health, renewed energies, and a well stored mind greatly benefited by the enlightening influences of foreign travel, it is confidently expected that he will be only too glad to buckle on again the armor of the Christian soldier, stand in the breach, and fight against the great adversary of our souls, as manfully and valiantly as he fought in days of yore.

I. L. Recording Steward. Truro, 23rd Aug. '83.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

DEAR EDITOR.—May I give your readers these items from our Pacific Province? The Financial District meeting was, the *Br. Colonist* reports, "rendered peculiarly interesting by the presence of three additional missionaries who have just arrived in the Province—the Rev. Mr. Bowell and the Rev. Mr. Seecombe from Newfoundland, and the Rev. T. W. Hall from the North West. The Rev. Mr. Seecombe proceeds to Maple Ridge, the Rev. Mr. Bowell to Nicola, to be associated with Rev. Mr. Henday, and the Rev. Mr. Hall to Clinton."

Bro. Seecombe's work (along the Fraser from New Westminster to Yale, 110 miles), will be partly to care for new settlers, partly to minister to men employed on the Emory-Moody branch of the C. P. R.

There will be three men—one married and two unmarried—on the circuit which I attempted to travel. The future, we are confident, will prove the wisdom of sending additional men east of the Cascades. The whole interior from Yale to Kicking Horse will, for the next two years, be the scene of railroad activity; the opening of the Galena mines of Kootenay, and the building of a road to connect them with the C. P. R., will immediately bring a considerable population to these solitudes, and the settlers will have more frequent services. Spahmichen, a farming settlement, where a congregation of forty, very intelligent and appreciative, can at any time be gathered, has had visits twice a year, Okanagan also anxious for Christian ordinances, once a year, while the missionary did well if he could reach such places as Alkali Lake, Big Bar, Canoe Creek and Lake La Hache once in two years.

The *Colonist* also reports, "two of the circuits become self-sustaining this year, viz. New Westminster and Sumas and Chilliwack."

I had intended to write of several other things, but this is quite long enough for this time. B. C. Shediac, 25th August, 1883.

MEMORIAL NOTICES.

Mrs. John Inch, of Jerusalem, died of paralysis on the 10th of July, 1883, aged 59 years.

Mrs. Inch was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Porter, of Greenwich, N. B. Her father was for many years the circuit steward of the Greenwich (now Jerusalem) Circuit: which position he filled with ability and energy, often walking 15 miles to attend the quarterly meeting, and back again.

Miss Porter was well trained in the Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church, Thirty five years ago she was married to Mr. John Inch, of Jerusalem, where she came to live immediately after her marriage. During those 35 years Mrs. Inch adorned the christian profession. In the class meeting her testimony was clear and strong. Her religious experience was deep and rich. All the interests of the Church shared in her sympathy. Her liberality extended to the Church, the parsonage, and the support of the Gospel on the circuit, in large degrees. Her everyday walk and conversation were in perfect harmony with her profession. It may be truly said of her, "She walketh with God." It is seldom one is privileged to witness a more consistent life.

In the death of Mrs. Inch the Church has lost a strong supporter; the family has lost a devoted wife, a most tender and truly affectionate mother. The community has lost one of its most highly esteemed members. Our great consolation is, she is not lost, but gone before.

One family we dwell in Him, One family above, beneath, Though now divided by the stream, The narrow stream of death.

Jerusalem, Aug 24, 1883. R. ORR.

BREVITIES.

When Goethe was asked the secret of success he defined it as "a wise limitation."

Count : "Don't you dance at all this evening, madame?" "Not till midnight." "Why so?" "Because to-day is the anniversary of my husband's death."

Nothing makes so much noise as a rickety wagon with nothing in it, unless it be the man who insists on talking when he has nothing to say.

Although we have no faith in the flattery, the flatterer, after all, attracts us. We cannot but feel some gratitude toward one who takes the trouble to lie to please us.—*Marie Eschenbach.*

An English coachman was asked to tie up a dog, and he resigned on the ground that it was the butcher's duty. The butcher declined and resigned, and after six servants had left the earl tied up the dog himself.

Dr. March says the best cure for hysteria is to discharge the servant-girl. In his opinion there is nothing like "flying around" to keep the nervous system from being unstrung. Some women think they want a physician, he says, when they only need a scrubbing brush.

A dumb person, uneducated in the use of signs, and only able to assent or dissent in answer to a direct question by a nod or shake of the head, is a competent witness; but the disability detracts from the weight of the testimony, and the jury should be so instructed.—*Verdict Supreme Court.*

A lady said to her little daughters who each month earn the money which they have for their own. "Children, I think you gave away too much last year; if you give one-tenth of your money this year it will be enough." One of the children replied, "Oh, mamma we owe one tenth, and we want to give something."

A nice-looking young man, who seated himself in a well-filled north-side car, held between his jeweled fingers the stump of a cigar, giving out his stinging fumes. One bright little miss remarked, so as to be heard, "If he will throw it away, I will pick him up a longer stump as soon as we get to the park." That young man went to the front platform to see a man.—*Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

The wives of men of sentiment are not always the most appreciative kind of women. Jean Paul represents Siebenkar as reading one of his beautiful imaginings to his wife, who listened with eyelids cast down and bated breath. As he closed the shutter of his joys beamed forth with, "Don't put on your left stocking to-morrow, dear; I must mend that hole in it."

"I do not see the matter as you see it," is often their excuse when pressed upon the subject. Wendell Phillips, in one of his anti-slavery orations, says:—"There are some things that a man cannot see unless he has a heart behind his eyes." This is quite true; and no doubt the want of sight on great moral and social questions is often owing to the want of heart.

It is a merciful provision of nature that, when great and sudden sorrow falls upon the soul, the blow, by its very force and certitude, deadens for a time the sensibility, so that we are allowed to realize only by slow degrees the full extent of our misery. This respite brief as it is, gives the vital forces time to rally, thus enabling us to endure for weeks, it may be for months and years, what otherwise would have proved instantly fatal. While we are fighting against the inevitable, we are allowed assistance, endeavors to make the best of things as they are, modifying our needs so far as possible to suit the new conditions circumstances have imposed upon us.

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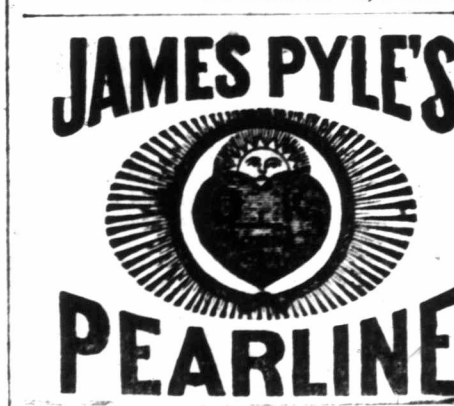
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