

The Career of Bishop McIntyre

AT the last General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in Baltimore, eight new bishops were elected, among them Rev. Dr. McIntyre, so well and favorably known as preacher and lecturer in Canada. His career is so unusual, and so full of inspiration to young people that we give some space to a sketch of his life, mainly in the language of the *Los Angeles Independent*.

Robert McIntyre came with his immigrant parents from Selkirk, Scotland, when not seven years old. For ten years he was a newsboy, peanut-seller on the railroads, a mill-worker and at times at school. But at seventeen this stopped. His father died and he at once had to be the mainstay of the family.

He was working at his trade as bricklayer in Philadelphia for the next three years, when the city of Chicago was smitten by the great conflagration. The call went broadcast over the country for mechanics to help rebuild the city, phenomenal wages being offered for bricklayers. Robert accepted the opportunity, and before he was twenty years of age he was piling up brick in the city that he little dreamed was to be the scene of his own first great triumph as a minister of the gospel, for at that time he had given no thought to religion.

A few years later he found himself in St. Louis, and there he found also the turning-point in his life. He was converted and at once became an active local evangelist, spending his evenings, after a hard day's work, in going anywhere that opportunity offered to tell the story of the new light that had broken upon him. Gradually it dawned upon him that he must become a preacher, and to better equip himself he enrolled as a student in Vanderbilt University, at Nashville, Tenn., and spent the year 1877 in that institution.

During this year another momentous event in his life had given him great concern. He had spent his last dollar to get the theological training afforded by a single year in the university, and he was looking forward with a forlorn hope to his wedding day.

He had plighted his troth with Miss Ella Chatten, of Quincy, Ill., and being without money, and not yet ordained to the ministry, he was in a dreadful state of perturbation. He made a clean breast of it to his sweetheart, and she, foreshadowing the character of a true helpmeet she has ever been, suggested a way out. Mrs. McIntyre said recently, in recounting the early days of her married life:

"I told Robert I was willing to get married and spend the first year in my mother's home, while he went out and got a start, and this is what we practically did, though later we borrowed \$100 from my mother and went to housekeeping."

On the last day of the year 1877 they were married, and talk of the event brought out the story of the only time in his life that Robert McIntyre ever wore a flower in his buttonhole. Though he is possessed of a soul filled with poesy, is passionately fond of flowers and is a true son of Nature, he has a natural antipathy to ornamenting himself in any way, and he is always plainly and unostentatiously clad.

He submitted to floral decoration of his person for the wedding ceremony under protest, and yielded to the entreaties of his bride and had his photograph taken with the bouquet attached. That ended it all, and never again did he wear a buttonhole ornament.

In the spring of 1878 he was ordained at the Methodist Conference held in Jacksonville, Ill., and when he was asked where he hoped to go for his maiden appointment, he replied: "Give me the hardest place you have; I want something worth doing."

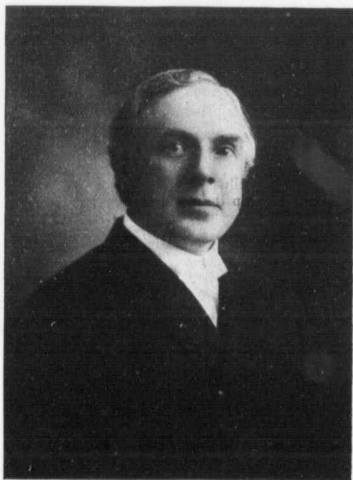
The bishop took him to Easton and he was sent to what was known as the "hard" circuit, with three preaching stations. It was a circuit without a church building; the people were notorious for their refusal to attend

religious meetings; many preachers had been sent there, but none of them would stay, as the people would not go to hear them.

Something happened when the eloquent young bricklayer appeared in the benighted neighborhood. The people not only went to hear him, but no place big enough to hold them could be found; so he suggested that if they would get together the brick for a church he would build it himself.

It is not at all probable that he had an idea that his announcement would create anything of a sensation away out there in the country, but that's just what it did.

Easton was a little village, midway between Mason City and Urbana, and when it was noised about that the young preacher, who had already become the country talk on account of his remarkable eloquence and popularity among the people, was actually building a church with his own hands, the old farmers began to drive over to see him at his work. Gradually the contagion spread, and not only the farmers, but people from the adjacent



BISHOP MCINTYRE

villages, drove to Easton to watch him do it. They took lunch and picnicked with him at his noon hour and then spent the afternoon hours in again watching him pile up the bricks.

They had no thought of helping him—the novelty was to see the preacher do it; but when the walls were about completed, they woke up sufficiently to conceive the idea of building a walk to the church doors, and this they did.

Anybody who has heard Dr. McIntyre deliver his lecture entitled "Buttoned-up People" will recall the relish with which he tells this story, and how they were convulsed with laughter at his humorous turns.

The result of the church-building stunt was that when the little church was done, it wasn't big enough to hold the people, for they came from all the country around to hear him preach.

As a descriptive orator, Bishop McIntyre has few equals on the American platform. His subjects cover a remarkable scope, and it is quite difficult to determine which is the most instructive and entertaining.

One of the greatest marvels is that none of them are

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