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POETRY.

Passing Away.

MARK TRAFTON, D. D.

Yes, I go; I may not stay;
All I've loved have passed away;
Strangers now are those I meet
Coldly passing on the street.
From earth's bonds I would be free;
Friendly death, I welcome thee.

Little now for me to do,
Long the way I've struggled through;
Weary now, I sigh for rest,
By life's burden sore distressed,
Grant me now a swift release,
End the conflict, give me peace.

I have filled my three-score years,
Strangely marked by smiles and tears;
Fleets met the battle's shock,
Stood with feet upon the rock.
Now the sword drops from my hand,
I can only cheer the band.

I would choose to leave the field,
Borne upon my battered shield,
As the Grecian mother gave
To her son the shield and glaive:
'This, or on it,' from the field,
'Fall you may but scorn to yield!'

Trust Him who is "strong to save",
Glad to fill the victor's grave;
Contend through his kingly power,
Trust him in the final hour;
Shout, "O death, where is thy sting?"
Whence, O grave, thy triumph bring?"

O, O Christian soldier, on!
Fill the final victory's won!
Soon the conflict will be o'er,
Fears disturbed thy peace no more;
In his kingdom resting there,
Each his triumph then shall share.

—Pittsburg Christian Advocate.

COMMUNICATIONS.

For the ADVOCATE.

The History of Methodism in North Carolina Prior to the Organization of the North Carolina Conference in 1837.

BY REV. ROBERT HENRY WILLIS, A. B. AND REV. JESSE ARMOR BALDWIN, A. B.

WITH A CRITICAL ESSAY ON THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

BY STEPHEN B. WEEKS, PH. D.

II.

History of Methodism in North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century.

BY REV. ROBERT HENRY WILLIS, A. B.

(Continued.)

CHAPTER III.

EARLY TROUBLES.

So far the writer has undertaken to give some idea of how Methodism was introduced into North Carolina, but has refrained from speaking to any extent of the difficulties with which it had to contend. He will now undertake to show under what discouragements the early pioneers laid the foundations of this movement.

One of the greatest of the clouds that overhung them was the Revolutionary War. In the other states the work was begun either before or after the war, and so of course under much less difficulty. In North Carolina, however, the first circuit was formed at the very beginning of the war, and many trials and hardships had to be undergone.

Asbury and his brethren from England were truly in a critical condition. The material on the relation of the English preachers to the Revolutionary War is obtained from McTyeire, 289-92, unless stated to the contrary. They were missionaries in America, and America was at war with their own country. They loved their brethren in the wilderness and had a longing for the souls of those who

were looking to them for help, yet they could not side with them against their own country. They could not remain silent and take neither side for they were already suspected of being in the interest of England. Many were only too glad to regard them as such, for they could in this way cripple the Methodist movement very materially. As Lee says, "if a person was disposed to persecute a Methodist preacher, it was only necessary to call him a Tory, and then they might treat him as cruelly as they pleased." [Lee, 74.]

To make matters still worse, about the beginning of the war Wesley wrote a "Calm Address to the American Colonies," and it was printed and scattered broadcast over the land. He exhorted them to be peacemakers and to say nothing of evil about either side. The publication of his letter raised a storm in England as well as in America, for there were many men in England who thought the colonies were right. No doubt the purposes of Mr. Wesley were good; he was simply using his influence to get the matter settled without war. Even before he sent this letter to the colonies, he wrote one to Lord North, the Premier, urging him not to begin the war, showing how very impracticable it would be. But this letter was never published and, perhaps, was never read by any save North, and Dartmouth, the Colonial Secretary, to whom a copy was sent, while copies of the letter to the colonies were seen and read by nearly everyone. Whatever may have been the purposes and intentions of Wesley, he got the credit of working in the interest of the crown, and his followers in America were likewise considered loyal to the king of England.

The English preachers were not inclined to desert their posts rashly; they preferred to stay in America if they could do so conscientiously. At the Conference of 1777 they resolved: That they would take no steps to detach themselves from the work of the ministry for the ensuing year, and that "We purpose, by the grace of God, to take no steps that may separate us from our brethren, or from the blessed work in which we are engaged." [Lee, 62.] Finally, however, all the preachers from Great Britain except Asbury saw fit to return home. Some of them acted very unwisely before leaving the country, as did Rodda who "had taken some imprudent steps in favor of the Tories," and thus brought "many sufferings and much trouble on the Methodist preachers and people." [Lee, 63.]

It is difficult to say how the native preachers stood with respect to the question. They had been very closely associated with Mr. Wesley and it would be hard for them now to break off all connection with England on that account. It is for this reason probably that "some of our preachers had scruples of conscience about taking the oath of allegiance in the different states where they labored." [Life of Coke, 57.] There is no proof that they were opposed to the cause of liberty for which their countrymen were fighting. Maryland recognized the fact and permitted the Methodist preachers to perform their duties without taking the oath of allegiance.

Some few of the Methodists were opposed to war under any considerations; they, like the Quakers, thought that war was wrong. [Bennett, Memorials of Methodism.]

Jesse Lee, when compelled to go into the army, could not be made to take a gun. [Life of Lee, 88-9.] It is not correct, however, to say that "the Methodists were as much opposed to bearing arms as the Quakers." [Southern Methodist Review, Sept., '87, p. 80.] The fact that a few Methodists were opposed to war is no reason for saying that the Methodist people as a whole were in opposition to it. On the contrary there are many instances in which prominent Methodists took part in this struggle. Green Hill, a Methodist minister, was one of the representatives from Bute county, now Franklin, in the Provincial Congress which met in Newbern, April 4th, 1774. He was a member of the Hillsboro Congress which met August 20th, 1775, and of the Halifax Congress of April, 1776. He was elected 2nd

Major of the regiment to be raised from Bute county. [Cent. of Methodism 47.] Mr. Ogden, one of the pioneers of Methodism in Kentucky, took a prominent part in the war. [Methodism in Kentucky, L., 23.] Philip Bruce suffered many narrow escapes from the Tories and was "one of the best friends of the American cause." He is said to have had "opportunities for collecting information respecting the designs and movements of the British, possessed by few in the neighborhood, and he never failed to make his knowledge serviceable to the cause of freedom." [Bennet, 179.]

The fact, however, that the Methodist movement was so intimately connected with England, and that some of the English preachers had acted so rashly before leaving the country, did much to hinder the growth of Methodism at this time. They were often treated very cruelly and in some places fine and imprisoned. [Lee, 74.] Then, too, the cause of religion always suffers from the ravages of war; it was much more so in this case. "It might be well said during this year [1777] that without *were* fightings, and *within* were fears. War, and the shedding of blood, was heard of in all directions: armies marching back and forth, one after another; and in many places the people were in great confusion, so that religion was almost banished from some neighborhoods where it had been pretty lively." [Ibid 62.]

North Carolina suffered most from the war in 1780-81. The number of Methodists had gradually increased until 1780, when 1811 members were reported. In 1781 there was a decrease of 471. They had not recovered from the effects of the war, in 1782, when there was a still further decrease. This was due of course to the several effects that war always produces. Many were called off to enter the army, and either never came back, or, if they did, their lives had become so corrupt that they were no longer worthy to be counted as church members. Some may have revolted on account of the odium existing against the people who were accused of being hostile to liberty.

There was another effect of the war which has not yet been mentioned. The Methodist people were dependent upon other denominations for the administering of the ordinances, as their own ministers were not regularly ordained. [McTyeire, 311.] They could not get their children baptized by the Presbyterians unless one of the parents was of their faith. They of course could not have them baptized by the Baptists nor could they receive the sacrament from their hands. The ministers of the church of England were very worldly, and those who had true religion were rather loath to administer the ordinances to them. The following words, which Jarrett had written to Wesley, will serve to give some idea of their character: "Virginia (the land of my nativity) has long groaned through a want of faithful ministers of the gospel. Many souls are perishing for lack of knowledge, many crying for the bread of life, and no man is found to break it to them. We have ninety-five parishes in the colony, and all—except one—I believe, are supplied with clergymen. But, alas! you will understand the rest. I know of but one clergyman of the Church of England who appears to have the power and spirit of vital religion; for all seek their own and not the things that are Christ's." [Ibid, 318.]

These clergymen were nearly all Englishmen and, when the war broke out, they either fled the country or retired into concealment so that the Methodists were prevented almost entirely from receiving the ordinances. Accordingly they began to clamor for them from their own ministers. The matter was discussed at the Conferences in 1777 and 1778, but was left unsettled. In 1779 the preachers in North Carolina and Virginia concluded that "if God had called them to preach, he had called them also to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper." [Lee, 69.] and so resolved to ordain their ministers so that they could supply the wants of the people. Their reason for doing so was that

"the Episcopal Establishment is now dissolved, and therefore, in almost all our circuits the members are without the ordinances." [Philip Gatch, quoted by McTyeire, 216.] Philip Gatch, Reuben Ellis and James Foster were appointed a presbytery with instructions first to ordain themselves, and then to ordain others of the brethren.

The preachers thus ordained went to work at once with renewed energy, filling all their appointments and administering the ordinances wherever the people would receive them. Some of the older Methodists objected, but the majority of the people were influenced by the leading preachers to acquiesce. The preachers had considerable success and considered this a token of God's approval of their action.

The preachers north of the Potomac censured their Southern brethren very harshly for the step they had taken. Asbury, anticipating the action of the preachers in North Carolina and Virginia, had called a quasi Conference to meet at Judge White's in Delaware. They wrote a letter to the Southern Conference warning them against taking any action that might cause separation. They met again in Baltimore in 1780, two weeks before the Southern preachers were to meet in Virginia. They regarded the Southern preachers as no longer Methodists unless they would consent to abandon the step they had taken. Asbury, Waters and Garretson were appointed a committee to inform the Southern preachers, and if possible, to bring about a re-union.

The proposition made by the Baltimore Conference was that the Southern preachers should refrain from administering the ordinances for twelve months, that they should all then meet together at Baltimore and that during the interval Mr. Wesley should be consulted. The proposition was at first rejected, and Asbury was about to leave with a heavy heart, before doing so he and the other two spent much time in prayer, and when he went to take leave of the brethren they reported that they had decided to acquiesce. Asbury says in his Journal: "We then had preaching by Brother Waters on 'Come thou with us and we will do thee good'—afterward we had a love-feast; people and preachers wept, prayed and talked, so that the spirit of disension was powerfully weakened, and I hoped it would never take place again." The preachers then went away to their respective circuits with thankful hearts that the separation had been prevented.

At the next Conference the greater part of the preachers decided to discontinue any tendency towards separation. It seems that they were waiting rather in suspense to see what Wesley could do for them; and the question was not settled until the Christmas Conference of 1784, when a separate church was organized.

What has been said concerning the war and the ordinances was of Methodism in America rather than in North Carolina alone. In both, however, North Carolina is especially concerned. It was necessary to give an account of the effects of the war, for a knowledge of these is necessary to understand the great difficulties under which Methodism was planted in this state. North Carolina was especially connected with the question of the ordinances because she played an equal part with Virginia in calling for them.

(To be continued.)

For the ADVOCATE.

The Provinces of Miracles.

BY QUESTUS.

A miracle is an act performed out of the usual order of nature for the purpose of indicating the presence of an agent who has power over nature. It is a wonderful work in that it necessarily excites wonder in the beholder. It is a sign, in that it indicates the supernatural presence. There is a sense in which God is known through nature in its ordinary movements. But to the common mind God is behind the curtain. His presence is only surmised from what we see of nature. Sometimes God

makes such movements in the curtain which conceals him as to leave no room for doubt that he is there. To the ordinary senses and faculties Jesus made no impression. The divinity in him was concealed, but when he walked upon the water or raised to life the dead, men saw that within this body of flesh there was more than mere man.

The miracle is a condescension on the part of God to accommodate himself to our grosser faculties. It is only a louder utterance of the voice of nature so that our dulled sense can hear, a more brilliant display so that our blinded eyes can see. Miracle is therefore a method of manifestation, and when wrought in connection with some new teacher or new order of things, it is also an attestation to the truth of the new message, and the authority of the messenger.

We do not need miracles now, since the manifestation has been made, and the true idea of God once given to the world. The miracles wrought in connection with the preaching of the Gospel once for all attest the divinity of the Gospel and serves the original purpose for all time to come. There will therefore be no more miracles because, none will ever again be needed. Having completed and introduced the Gospel their work is done except that the record of them, so well attested, continues unto all generations, their only useful effect among men. Miracles are aids to faith in that they make faith easier, and in many cases possible. It is noticeable that the miracles of Jesus were typical of the work of the gospel in its largest sense. The miracles of healing for instance typified the results of the Gospel in bringing about a condition of knowledge and disposition which would lift man above the low planes of hopeless bondage to disease. They also typify spiritual results of the Gospel in its effects upon the souls of men.

For the ADVOCATE.

Coming Events.

BY REV. E. L. PERKINS, M. D.

People who read, reason and reflect cannot fail to feel a deep interest in the future of our religious and political movements. Among all the leading powers we can see that there is a spirit of unrest and dissatisfaction, and the cry of "reform" is on the wind; in some cases with reason and in some without sufficient reason for such a cry.

In one stratum of society the spirit of anarchy prevails, with a special tendency to the destruction of all law and order. This is a craze and not a well defined principle. In another stratum of society there is a spirit of indifference to everything outside of what concerns self. Of this class nothing may be expected for the general good of mankind. There is another stratum of society having the general good of mankind in view, and are actively engaged in pushing forward every enterprise that looks to the elevation of the human family. In this class will be found many statesmen, lawyers, clergymen, farmers, mechanics and laborers of every condition in life. They advocate law and order and seek to promote the good of society by adherence to established principles. Should there be a general upheaval of society, by revolutionary methods, the second class would be impelled by their selfish motives to join their strength with the third class to secure their fortunes against the ravages of anarchy. That there will be many upheavals in the shape of rebellion against the existing order of things there is but little room to doubt. But that law and order will ultimately triumph, there is as little room for doubt, especially among those who believe that the world is growing better. But here comes the question, "Is the world growing better or worse?" To answer this correctly we must notice what the world has been, what it is now, and what provision is made for the shaping of future society. Those who dwell in a dark room do not discover the filth upon the floor—turn on the light and that which was unnoticed becomes offensive. The superior light of the present genera-

tion causes the follies of the age to appear very conspicuously. But he is a dull reader of history who has failed to notice that the benevolent institutions of the present generation far outnumber such institutions in the past centuries. It will not be going too far to say that a greater number of institutions have been established, for the uplifting of humanity, during the present century, than in all the past centuries combined. Such rapid and extensive movements in favor of suffering and down-trodden humanity are attributable to the rapid spread of Christian principles. Christ, the light of the nations, hath shone upon the people, and many who have made no formal acknowledgment of his influence are nevertheless affected largely by Christian civilization. While it is true that, "wicked men wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," it is also true that the righteous are as a "burning and shining light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day." As light is stronger than darkness it gives us all a chance to become optimists of the most hopeful view.

In answer to the question "Is the world growing better?" Dwight L. Moody says: "There is every indication that the present dispensation will end in a great smash-up; but I believe out of that smash-up the most glorious age in the world's history will come. So I look into the future, not with despair, but with unbounded delight." The exact shade of meaning to be attached to the term "smash-up" in the above quotation we cannot define. We know that the Jewish dispensation ended in a "smash-up" when Jerusalem with the temple was destroyed and the Jews dispersed, but we have not been taught to look for a similar "smash-up" of the Christian dispensation. On the contrary we have been taught that Christ shall reign till all his enemies have been put under his feet. There will be, doubtless, many a "smash-up" in the political organizations of the world. The present unrest is prophetic of such events.

The great oppression of extravagant governments on the eastern continent is goading the people to desperation, and in this way reforms are goaded, into existence. But the end of oppressive rule will be the beginning of greater liberty and consequently of greater light.

The church of God, under the lead of the different denominations, each moving in separate columns, but all steadily advancing upon the same foe, must prove invincible to the cohorts of the Evil One. The prophecy was uttered in heaven and committed to St. John, for delivery upon the earth, that the time would come when it would be said that "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." Rev. xi. 15.

The mighty revolutions that the present unrest portends are only God's storms for purifying the political and religious atmosphere of the world. The present outlook indicates that the coming century will find the earth spotted with many battlefields, with kings and emperors in distress of fleeing for their lives, but let not the Christian's faith forsake him, the church will rise out of this baptism of suffering with stronger faith and with energy renewed for future conflict.

Scraps.

How appalling is the condition of a soul dead in trespass and in sin! It is in the dark stormy night of disobedience, wrapped in the shroud of sin, lying in the coffin of condemnation, near it stands the burning lamp of perdition, and around it sit the black demons of hell, awaiting orders to form a funeral procession, take up the soul, carry it out, and bury it in the grave of everlasting punishment.—Rev. E. C. Sell.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak." This is a danger-signal erected by Christ himself. No wonder! If it were possible for heaven to weep, and if anything on earth could be sad through to bring tears from above, nothing it seems, would bring them sooner than a soul's departure from the favor of God.—Rev. E. C. Sell.