

Rev. George Herod

Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by John Parrott

MEMOIR OF THE REV. GEORGE HEROD.

“Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?”

How solemn the appeal! How affecting the response of our Connexional records! Only two of our first ministers remain on earth, and only five of those first enrolled in the Preachers' Fund, and they are all superannuated, being past regular labour! Truly “all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass: the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.”

The late GEORGE HEROD was born September 13th, 1797, and departed this life August 30th, 1862. As a man his figure was graceful, about five feet nine inches high, very erect, wiry and well built. His tread was firm, yet quick and elastic; his brow was open and unclouded, and his face ruddy; his eye dark, keen in its glance, and lit up with intelligence; his lip compressed and finely curved, and, as might have been anticipated, much active labour, physical endurance, firmness, and decision of character, with considerable sensitiveness and just taste, became developed in him.

But he lacked all the advantages of a religious training and a proper education in youth, and grew up to manhood under the blighting influences of anti-religion and a bad example, which nourished and strengthened the propensities of his fallen nature. His father was an open sinner, a hater of religion, and a hot persecutor of God's dear children. His mother was of a milder nature and better morals, but not decidedly religious, and died while George was young. Their sons, thus left, copied too closely the example of their father, grew up in depravity, and had obtained a notoriety for godlessness when the Primitive Methodists first visited East Bridgford, Nottinghamshire, where the family then resided.

George was in the very act of persecution, disturbing a prayer-meeting, when, in November, 1816, the Holy Spirit first awoke his conscience to a sense of his sinfulness under the earnest prayer of his next door neighbour, a boy not thirteen years of age, that boy being the present writer. In the following March he was brought more effectually to feel the greatness of his guilt and danger, under a sermon preached by Sarah Kirkland, the first female itinerant ever employed by the Connexion, and he ultimately obtained a very clear sense of God's pardoning mercy in a prayer-meeting after a sermon preached by that prince of missionaries, the late W. Clowes, on “September 13th or 15th (the figure is defective), 1817.” We have a very clear recollection of that memorable evening, its persecutions and successes, and were praying with the penitent G. Herod, when he by faith first laid hold on Jesus, sprang into Gospel liberty, and terminated his ten months' struggle with conviction for sin, on the day that he became twenty years of age.*

His previous total ignorance of the plan of salvation, his confirmed habits of sinning, the natural force of his will, and the influence of his godless associations, prevented his realizing salvation earlier. But from that hour his regeneration was made visible to all who knew him. He at once joined our young society, of which my father was the leader, and his ardent love soon broke forth into flaming zeal for God's cause and glory. Our small society then worshipped in a tenanted cottage, and suffered great persecution; but a glorious work of soul-saving was carried on there and in surrounding villages, and many efficient class-leaders, local preachers, and missionaries were raised up, and sent forth to break up new ground, or to cultivate what was newly enclosed. Among these were George Herod, James Moss, Thomas Charlton, John Parrott, &c.

* See Herod's “Sketches,” page 320. Also Clowes' “Journal,” page 89.

Prompted by his new and heaven-born principle, and aided by natural courage, our departed brother soon made himself felt in all our means of grace. Soul-saving being pre-eminently the watchword of our early missionaries, a corresponding spirit was infused into our infant societies, and imbibed by our youths. The Connexional labourers were then few, and the openings very many; so that all kinds of pious efforts which bore the stamp of pure love for souls, were fostered by the itinerant preachers who visited our locality. The creation of churches by the conversion of sinners was the great work then unitedly sought to be accomplished.

And unsolicited by man, but prompted by their inward yearning for souls, some of these youths started house-to-house visitations, read the Scriptures, and prayed with families on work-day evenings. Some received them gladly, and others drove them from their doors as presumptuous impertinents. By their own arrangements they also visited other places on Sabbath days. Several of them usually met and travelled together to some previously fixed on village, often kneeling under hedges by the wayside, praying for Divine assistance and success. On arriving at their destination, they sang along the streets to a suitable place, then proceeded with a regular service, singing, and praying, and reading a chapter or a portion of one. One would then relate his conversion and present experience, and assure the people that the same blessings were for them, quoting God's word in confirmation. Another would follow, and sometimes one would venture to expound a passage of Scripture. These juvenile missionaries, whose prayer, earnestness, and decorum were accompanied by the Spirit of God, commonly produced copious flowings of tears among their hearers, and eternity only will reveal the good thus effected. In this way many villages were first missioned which now form parts of Nottingham, Ikeston, Mansfeld, Newark, and Bottesford Circuits, together with Oxtou Branch. Then and thus were these young men and boys unconsciously fitting themselves for doing and suffering what was awaiting them in the regular missionary and ministerial work of the Connexion to which they were afterwards called.

George Herod was the leading spirit in these youthful enterprises, for young and old thought they felt and saw in him that superiority of adaptation which rarely fails to secure its own position among those whose motives are pure, and whose only ambition is success in their undertaking. And what would be the effect. now were our youths and converted people equally actuated by the same heaven-born spirit and zeal? In every city, town, and village, there is scope for their ardent love and holy action in house-to-house visitations, cottage prayer-meetings, and even open-air services. What aid would this kind of effort render our regular ministry! — what new life infuse into the older societies! And what vast facilities and encouragements are there now for it compared with the period of which we are writing! Prompted and stimulated, as we have reason to know, by kindred proceedings and successes in our Connexion, — and we do not say it in vain glory, nor without data, — city and town organisations have been by others formed to do the very same work. Surely we, as a community thus originated, cannot surrender the work to others, or leave it for agencies not better fitted for the work. And would not such voluntary efforts greatly contribute to the proper training of our future staff of regular missionaries and ministers, whose close attention to and skill in this work, were never more needed than at present ?

Brother Herod was officially placed upon his Circuit's plan early in 1818, and although he knew little of systematic theology and modern sermonising, his heart was filled with love for perishing souls. Practically he understood "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," by which he had "obtained redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of his sins, according to the riches of His grace." With these points before his mind he, as a stripling David, with his sling and a few stones, sallied forth, "endowed with power from on high," which his prayers and addresses brought down upon God's children, and which pierced with conviction the unsaved. As truly characteristic of the young man's zeal and theological acquirements, we venture one relation.

A number of the “baser sort” of young men, who had been his companions, usually beset the cottage in which we worshipped, waylaid the congregation, &c., so that we could not conclude a religious service in peace and safety. At length it was agreed to apply to a magistrate for protection, himself a clergyman, and known to be unfriendly towards us; but all the elder members shrunk from the task. Ultimately George Herod volunteered, on condition that a senior brother would accompany him for a summons. On stating the grievance to the magistrate, the following dialogue took place:—

Magistrate.— Who are the Primitive Methodists?

Herod.— They are Christians, sir, who are trying to get to heaven, and to get as many sinners converted as possible, by preaching the Gospel and holding religious meetings in W Millington’s house, which is licensed for the purpose.

M.— Pray what do they preach?

H.— Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,” sir.

M.— What is “repentance towards God?”

H.— Repentance is a person’s feeling deeply sorry for his sins, and determining, by God’s grace, to sin no more.

M.— What is faith?

H.— Faith is faith, sir; as St. Paul saith, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved.”

M.— O, faith is faith! yes, and pudding is pudding! I shall not grant you a summons, so go about your business.

Besides sharing in the persecutions then endured by our society, Brother H. was painfully persecuted by his own father, with whom he resided and worked. But he endured all as a Christian, and was by God’s people considered a miracle of saving grace.

On April 21st, 1819, he was married to her from whom the Master hath called him to rest, leaving her behind in widowhood and sorrow, but with a prospect of a speedy reunion in the spirit world, where are fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. At the following September Quarterly Meeting, his own (Nottingham) Circuit regularly called him out, and sent him to mission in Lincolnshire, for which he cheerfully left his new home comforts, and prospects of competency, accepting the small pittance of ten shillings per week, out of which to provide for himself and wife. And full of burning zeal, he laboured and suffered indefatigably with his kind colleague, the Rev. Thomas King; and before these two “servants of the Most High God,” the country-side fell, so that a wide door was effectually opened for gathering souls to the Saviour, and the establishment and increase of our Connexion there. In less than two years, upon the ground now occupied by Grimsby, Louth, Market Rasen, and Alford Circuits, fifty places were opened, and upwards of 500 souls gathered into church fellowship at them. How gratifying to those two veterans must have been the sight of their spiritual progeny, with their subsequent increases, on this first field of their missionary toils and sufferings, as presented in the reports of last Conference; viz. 2,819 members, 11 travelling preachers, 161 local preachers, 152 class-leaders, 76 chapels, &c., (50 of which are Connexional,) 19 Sabbath-schools, 1,517 scholars, and 370 teachers; and all in a comparatively rural and thinly-peopled district. Then there are the vast numbers who have removed thence elsewhere on earth, or to heaven. Oh! what must it be for Brother H. to stand up yonder, surrounded by those who went before him, and looking down here, to feel the full force of that inspired text, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them?”

Brother Herod has left voluminous journals, of many hundred closely-written pages, dating from his first entering the ministry, and, as may be expected, there are during these forty-one years deeply interesting details of stirring enterprises, peculiar difficulties, signal deliverances, and rich successes, chapels building, improving, debts reducing, &c. And it has refreshed us no little to find on every page the clearest evidences

of genuine piety, deep-felt abasement before God, because of his own felt imperfections, fasting and prayer for more holiness of heart; then exultations in deliverances, and the clearest manifestations of God to his soul, pathetic lamentations over the wide-spread evidences of human depravity, the comparatively little “pure and undefiled religion” to be found even where it was natural to expect most. But our space admits of little more than their mention, and to make the best selection among so much is difficult. However, incidents being most acceptable to the generality of memoir readers, we transcribe the following sample:—

“Grimsby Mission, Oct. 3rd.*—Went to Saltfleet, and preached in the fair to a large congregation, with great power. Before I had done the devil raged very much. A man disturbed us by trying to drive two young horses among the people. I felt the Lord had not done with that man.

“4th.—Went and preached again at Saltfleet, and was told the man that made the disturbance yesterday got a fall last night, cut his head very bad, broke his collar-bone, and almost killed himself. I hope it will be a warning to all around.

“15th.—Preached at Tothill; had much liberty, and a good time we had. At two o'clock preached at Withern; here the word seems to have no effect, the people being hardened in sin.** When I reached Grimsby, felt wearied with my labours,*** but had a large congregation, and it was a powerful time to many souls. After preaching, I formed a society of nine persons. It has been a glorious day to my soul.

“Nov, 4th, Saturday.—While preaching at Thoresby to a large congregation the power of God came down, sinners trembled, and while I was praying the Lord broke in upon a woman, and she sang for joy.

“5th, Sunday morning.—Held a meeting at seven o'clock, and another at half-past nine. Fifteen souls were brought in, and joined society. At half-past ten I preached again to a very large congregation. The Lord made bare his arm; two more souls got liberty, and many were in distress. At two o'clock I held a lovefeast at Dulstow, and the glory of God was felt so much that I was constrained to say, ‘How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the pate of heaven’ At four o'clock I left the meeting with believers to pray for those in distress, and, after taking a little tea, walked nine miles. It rained and blew in my face so that sometimes I had hard work to take my breath. I reached Grimsby a little before seven o'clock. A great congregation was waiting, so in my wet clothes I fell to work, and while pressing the people to live to God and prepare to die, the Holy Ghost fell on them. One soul got liberty, and with several more under deep conviction I laboured, while the water from my clothes, which were as if I had been in a river, drained down me, running over and out of my shoes. I was in this condition for three hours. I walked twelve miles, and held five meetings; but to my soul it was a glorious day, and I will praise God for all.

*Either 1819 or 1820, which we cannot decipher, the paper being injured.

** This people, however, yielded to the power of the Gospel, for a few weeks afterwards he writes, “I preached at Withern to a house-full of people, and formed a society of nine (persons) in earnest for their souls.”

***Who can wonder? We had already preached twice, and walked twenty-seven miles—twenty-three of those miles between his afternoon and evening services! Wishing to avoid an incorrect statement, we wrote to the Rev. C. Kendall, present superintendent of Grimsby Circuit, and to J. Maltby, Esq., of Louth Park, General Missionary Treasurer. Both of them kindly investigated and replied. Mr. Maltby says, “Mr. Kendall took the distance from Grimsby to Withern, twenty-three miles, Tothill is about four miles from Withern,” This was both labouring and “winning souls,”

“Monday, 6th.— Preached at Struby, and had a glorious time. The seed sown begins to make its appearance. We shall have a church here. The Lord preserved me from taking cold yesterday, and gives strength according to my day.

“Nov. 16th.— Preached at Tothill. The Spirit of the Lord was poured upon the people; sinners began to cry for mercy; thirteen were brought in, and I formed them into a class.

“30th.— Preached at Saltfleet to a large congregation, with much liberty, and the word went with power to sinners’ hearts. I believe souls will be brought to God in this place, the devil rages so; his agents fired guns while I was preaching, and after I had done, as I was passing by them; but I felt a calm serenity in possession of that religion that would carry me to heaven.

“Saturday, Dec. 9th.— Preached at Trusthorpe, and many were in tears,

“Sunday, 10th.—Met class at half-past nine, and had much of the presence of God. At half-past ten preached to a very large congregation, and many souls got convinced. At two o’clock the glory of God was with us; the meeting continued till six o’clock; thirteen souls got liberty, and believers were strengthened. I could hardly contain myself. At half-past six I preached again; many stood on the outside, unable to get in. I gave tickets afterwards to the members.

“Monday, 11th.—While visiting and praying with the people from house to house, I felt the power of God in my soul. At night preached at Sutton to a large congregation. The Spirit of God attended the word, and the stout-hearted trembled. Praise the Lord for what he is doing in this part. About seven months ago the people were very ignorant about the state of their souls; now half the inhabitants appear anxious for salvation.

“Bridlington Branch of Hull Circuit, May 27th, 1822.— I left Bridlington at five o’clock this morning, and walked to York, 42 miles. Spoke in York Chapel at night, and God blessed my soul.

“29th.— After our mutual conversations about becoming more united as a body, in which consultations I was glad to see such a strong desire for the work of God to prosper, we sang and prayed, and never did I feel such a heaven in my life. The glory of God came down amongst us, and our souls were filled with joy and peace. After we broke up, I left York in company with Brother Armitage, and walked to Driffield, thirty miles, and arrived about midnight, much fatigued.

“30th.—Left Driffield, walked to Bridlington Quay, and preached at night, and it was a powerful time to many souls. The word was made a blessing.

“June 1st.— We have held our Quarterly Meeting at Bridlington Quay, and settled our business in unity and peace, and have an increase of members and money. In prayer we had a powerful time; God baptised our souls with his Holy Spirit.

“Sunday, June 2nd.— At the seven o’clock prayer-meeting the Lord was amongst us, and souls were affected. Preached at half-past ten at Bridlington Quay, and the presence of God did rest upon the congregation. At two o’clock I got hold of God in prayer, and Divine power did shake the people. Souls began to cry for mercy; many were in distress, two got liberty, and nine declared they had received the blessing of a clean heart. At night preached at Bridlington; a good time. I still believe souls will be converted. Lord Jesus, ride on. This day I have been much encouraged to pray for God to revive his work.”

When he arrived in the North Shields Station, in 1828, he set his heart on missioning Berwick-on-Tweed, and on having the country occupied from the river Tyne to the capital of Scotland. He sketched his plans, commenced action with his usual energy, and to a remarkable extent realised his wish. Difficult as was the enterprise in that region, so proverbially hostile to Methodism, in about three years the whole was traversed by himself and colleagues. Belford, Alnwick, Jedburgh, Kelso, Wooler, Holy Island, Berwick, Edinburgh, and other places, were occupied. During the five years he spent in this region, many were his sufferings and successes, frequently walking from twenty to thirty miles a-day, besides preaching three times, leading classes, and conducting prayer-meetings.

One morning he and the writer left Berwick after breakfast, and took tea the same evening with Mr. Lister, in Edinburgh, he being then stationed there, having walked all the way, and carried the book parcel (14 lbs. weight) a distance of more than sixty miles; and, after personally inspecting the state of that mission, we walked the whole journey back to Berwick. Our light finances forbade the payment of the heavy coach fares of that period.

“On Sept. 11, 1828,” he writes, “met the Circuit Committee, which agreed to open a mission at Berwick-on-Tweed.” That, however, could not be carried out before “January 2, 1829.” Then Mr. W. Clough, a very successful young man under God, effectually opened that mission.* A few months afterwards we find Mr. Herod in Berwick, preparing for and superintending the building of the present excellent chapel, schoolroom, and minister’s house; battling and overcoming the great difficulties which sprang up in the way.

“July 23, 1829,” he writes, “Harassed much with the devil. 24th. Held a meeting, and agreed to purchase ground for a chapel. I hope it is of God. 25th. A day of trial and darkness respecting the chapel building. Preached this evening in Castle Gate. A powerful time. 26th, Sunday. Preached in the room at half-past ten; felt liberty. At one, on the Town-hall steps, to many hundreds; and again, at six o’clock, to a mass of people; and good was done. Administered the Sacrament; a solemn time. In the prayer-meeting afterwards, the power of God came down, many souls in distress, and some got liberty.

27th. The society was thrown into confusion through the work last night. The leaders said if that was religion, they could not do with it, and asked if it was in our creed for preachers to pray so loud as to make the people cry out! Obtained promise of part of the money for the chapel. 28th. This has been a day of great trouble. The people are all up in arms against us for allowing persons to cry for mercy. They consider it blasphemy! While visiting to-day, found some who testified that God had pardoned their sins on Sunday night. Had liberty in preaching this evening. Many present. After service three or four of the trustees refused to stand, and one leader gave up his class-paper, and left society, because of what he calls the disturbance in Sunday night’s meeting! Our prospects are black, but I leave all with the Lord. 30th. Brother Lister again accompanied me to seek money for the chapel, and obtained promise of some. Met a class, then held a prayer-meeting.”

The moneys promised as above, were refused when needed, and things became very gloomy at this critical juncture, and produced the deepest distress in the minds of Brothers Herod and Lister. Mr. Clough had been called away to the home branch. How deliverance was obtained by them, we gather from the following,—“In my distress, I fell down before God in the deepest agonies of soul, and implored His help, and in my last struggle in private, I was enabled to believe for deliverance.”

* See Petty’s History of the Connexion, p. 248.

Directly afterwards, the door was rapped, and my colleague answered it, and brought in a letter containing £70 in bank notes; just the sum we wanted. Oh, what gratitude filled our hearts! The letter had no person's name signed to it, but read, "From a Friend, £15; Wellwisher, £25; Anonymous, £30;—£70." Those buildings became an ornament to the town, an honour to the Connexion, and were left in comfortable circumstances.

The following is a brief summary, drawn up by Mr. Herod's hand, of the stations in which he laboured, and his varied success therein,—

"Grimsby Mission: more than 500 souls gathered into the societies. York branch: 100 increase, Burlington Branch: 50 increase. Preston missioned. Lancaster and county: 100 increase. Blackburn Mission: found 14 members, left 175. Oldham: found a debt of £14, paid it off; 100 increase. Sunderland; many converted, but no reportable increase on the numbers given in at March prior to my entry at Midsummer. Newcastle-on-Tyne; found a debt of £28, reduced it to £14; 70 increase. North Shields: a glorious work in many places, and many converted during the three years. Missioned Alnwick, Kelso, Berwick-on-Tweed, &c.; made Berwick into a new Circuit, spent two years in the new Circuit, and took up Edinburgh as a mission from Sunderland. Leicester Circuit; found it in division and wretchedness; left 50 more than I found, and the cause has gone ahead since." Then follow the names, of the other Circuits in which he travelled, for four of which an aggregate decrease of 174, and in the remainder an aggregate increase of 217 are given.

Having been thus employed in active service as a home missionary, and itinerant minister for about forty-one years, the Conference of 1860 awarded him superannuation. And on the kind invitation of long tried friends, he located at Helmsore in the Haslingden Circuit, which he had missioned in 1823, and to which he was twice afterwards stationed. A neat cottage and garden were very kindly placed at his disposal, in which himself and wife lived rent free. And, being still capable of preaching on Sabbath days, in order to make his latter end more comfortable, and at the same time to benefit the cause of God by his preaching and long experience, the same kind friends, under official sanction, allowed him £5 per quarter, as long as he could preach. A truly Christian example, and worthy of record to the glory of God's grace in them.

Mr. Herod's end appears to have been accelerated by a cold taken during a journey to preach special sermons in Leicester, in the winter of 1860. This brought-on inflammation of the liver, and jaundice, from which he suffered much, and never recovered, though he continued his pulpit exercises up to February 23rd, 1862. That morning's sermon was his last, and he could not go through the whole service. For about four months he tried change of air and a skilful physician. On returning home, May 14th, he became confined chiefly to his bed for about three months, during which his surviving widow says, "he experienced much peace of mind and often used the words, 'Oh, how happy I am! My soul rests in Christ the atoning Lamb,'—and similar expressions." On August 16th, by his physician's advice he was conveyed to Harrogate, to try the steel waters. But ossification of the liver had taken place, and his Harrogate doctor said to Mrs. Herod, "Your husband will die." On the 25th, while preparing for his return home, cold chills seized him: that was death, about which he spoke freely to his wife and attendant friends; and when asked if ready to die, he calmly said, "O yes." When they believed he had fully entered the bed of Jordan, they asked the state of his soul at that solemn juncture, and he replied, "I rest, I REST, I REST on His arm." These were the last words uttered on earth by this singularly active servant of God, who thus passed off to his reward within fourteen days of the completion of the 65th year of his age, in the 45th of his Primitive Methodist Christian life, and the 43rd of his public ministry.

The Rev. Thomas King writes, "The late Rev. G. Herod was appointed by the Nottingham Quarterly meeting, held September, 1819, to take part with me on that extensive and laborious mission, including Grimsby, Louth, Market Rasen, and the large tract of country around those stations. And of him it may be truly said,

he was filled with zeal, and love, and truth; and hence he was well fitted for a mission where the journeys were long, the roads bad, friends few and far between, and trials numerous and severe. No trial, however, was thought by him too great either by day or night, so that he might succeed in the important work in which he was engaged. I always found Brother Herod when stationed with me, to be a truly pious, energetic, laborious, kind, and devoted fellow-labourer in the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and he was the honoured means of bringing many souls to the Saviour. From the commencement of that mission, to the Conference of 1821, societies were raised up numbering upwards of five hundred members, so mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed."

"At Christmas, 1828," writes Rev. W. Lister, "I was sent to a mission (Alnwick ?) connected with North Shields Circuit, of which Mr. Herod was then superintendent. During those years, we had much intercourse, part of the time we lived in the same house. We frequently had long journeys in company—as far as thirty miles a day, on foot. Railways we then had not, and our low funds would not permit us to pay the high coach fares of those days. But amidst many deeply trying and depressing circumstances arising out of chapels building, having few friends, many opposers, small salaries, &c., God prospered his work. There was a revival in the Circuit, which cheered us. Many who were converted then, are officers in the Connexion at this day; a great many more have fallen asleep in Jesus, and, no doubt will be Mr. H's crown of rejoicing in the last day. In prayer, he was powerful; his preaching abilities were acceptable; his style was clear, impressive, varied, and practical. The matter of his sermons was always important, naturally arranged, and delivered with energy. He was remarkable for promptitude, indefatigable industry, and indomitable firmness. There was intrepidity about all his movements, and a restlessness in trying to improve some part of the machinery, in order to move more effectually the great work with which he stood identified. His understanding was more quick than profound; his natural temper was sanguine and confident; he possessed good moral principles, truth in the inward parts, and unbending integrity. When he lacked patience with an opponent, he sometimes got foes in business meetings. But whatever infirmity he laboured under, he was a laborious, unwearied, and successful missionary and minister."

Our general missionary treasurer, John Maltby, Esq., says,— "Respecting George Herod's usefulness in this neighbourhood, too much cannot be said. If lanes and village greens, or even willow trees could speak, they would say, 'Send us a Herod, and others of the same stamp.' Lanes, &c., I am fearful will speak out against us, if we do not visit them as the Primitive fathers did. Part of the ground he broke up is gone again to its original barrenness."

When he entered the field," says the Rev. W. Clough, "a Primitive Methodist minister was a unique man, called to a unique work, a work of magnificent proportions, and surrounded with a moral and spiritual grandeur of no mean order, a work blessed of God, and honoured by the wisest and best of men. But it required an entire negation of self, good physical powers, quenchless zeal, dauntless courage, great spirituality of mind, readiness of invention, force of character, aptness for creating occasions of usefulness, an intellect permeated with Gospel truth, and a facile method of communicating that truth to the masses from whom he was to gather, teach, and discipline a people for the service of God. To this high class of men, Mr. Herod belonged, and in just proportions he possessed these large endowments; and this judgment is given from a personal knowledge reaching over thirty-seven years, seven consecutive years of which we wrought together. In the pulpit he was grave, modest, collected, realizing the responsibility of his position. In prayer, as he neared the mercy-seat, it was as though he had only to ask and have; and this exercise, though short, was peculiar for its breadth and fulness. He quietly gave out his text, which he briefly opened: his divisions were natural, his language simple, neat, and of racy strong Saxon English. He dealt little with the ideal or imaginative, and what some term philosophical preaching, was his abhorrence, deeming it a desecration of the ministry. He preached Christ for us as our justification, and the Holy Spirit within us as

our sanctification. On these great themes, with their cognates, he ever dwelt, presenting them in varied phases, which gave them a spicy freshness. When in full sail, he was eloquent, but it was the eloquence of thought and conception permeated with unction from above, and on such occasions his was truly a tongue of fire, melting and burning the sinner, and warming and igniting the affections and zeal of the devoted children of God.” *

By dint of close application while discharging the arduous duties of his station, Mr. Herod acquired a knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages, so as to be able to read the Scriptures in their originals, which he found at once gratifying and profitable. “From the year 1825 to 1831,” says Mr. Clough, then his colleague, “as a rule he read his Greek Testament every day, and in any *vexata questio* of Divine truth he consulted the original. He was not a bold speculator in theology, but with reverential obedience of faith, he sat and listened to the teachings and biddings of the Book of God.” And this practice was not confined to this period of his life, but continued; his mind was also well informed by general reading, yet not profoundly so. As a consistent Methodist preacher, he closely studied the works of Wesley, Benson, Fletcher, Dr. A. Clarke, Watson, and other theologians of that school, and made himself familiar with their views of the doctrines contained in the Christian Scriptures, although he by no means confined himself to the works of Arminians. He also pressed upon his younger colleagues the propriety and necessity of their doing the same. As one of his colleagues, we well remember his lectures on the great impropriety and even danger to be apprehended from young preachers studying the theology of antagonistic divines, prior to mastering sound Methodistic Arminian views of those doctrines which we were set apart and expected conscientiously to teach. We also remember that thirty years ago he strongly advocated a system of supervising and directing the studies of our probationers, similar to what the Connexion has found it needful recently to adopt. As may be supposed, in his doctrinal views, Mr. Herod was a sound Methodist, very decisive, and he made himself clearly understood in social intercourse, in the pulpit, and through the press.

He published several useful works; his first was “on the pardon of all past sins, the witness of the Spirit, and the sanctification of our nature, to be experienced and distinctly known by every believing child of God. It consisted of sixty-six pages, 12mo., with a copper-plate engraving of Berwick-on-Tweed Primitive Methodist Chapel and minister's house. It was published in Berwick in the form of a “Dialogue between John Telltruth and Henry Inquisitive.” In that locality, at that period, these doctrines were almost universally disbelieved and strongly opposed, and their preachers were denounced as teachers of false doctrine, and guilty

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* For twenty-three years, Mr. Clough has been the training superintendent of “The Country Towns’ Mission,” which in the Home work employs about 200 agents. And during these years, many hundreds of young men have been by him put through a course of theology, house to house visiting, journal keeping, &c., fitting them for the missionary work. Some of these have become clergymen in the Established Churches of England and Scotland; others are Dissenting ministers; others are employed as missionaries to the heathen in Asia, Africa, Polynesia, and among the Papists in Spain and France. Mr. Clough was himself trained under Mr. Herod for seven consecutive years. He has, moreover, continued to exercise his influence privately and publicly favourably to the community and its operations, in which God converted him and fitted him for the work which he has so successfully and honourably conducted up to the present. Surely eternity only can reveal the wide spread and large amount of influence for good exerted by the operations and example of the Primitive Methodist community on the kingdom of Christ in the world; and while we gratefully refer to the facts, we render all the glory to God, as is meet; for all the good done in this world. He is the doer of it.

of leading the people into deadly errors, so that the minds of many became strongly prejudiced against us and our doctrines. This book was very useful, for after reading it in their houses, many of the peasants freely talked to their neighbours about the sayings of "John Telltruth," who met the common prejudices in familiar language, well sustained by direct Scriptural quotations. His second work was, "A Word to Preachers, Sunday School Teachers, and Parents," founded on "Feed my lambs;" twenty-four pages, 12mo., and good of its kind. His third was a "Catechism of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament," very useful, and sold well. His fourth is a "Catechism forming a system of Theology for the use of Sabbath Schools, Families," &c., in three parts. Eight editions have been sold, and the ninth is now in the market, a portion of which has been bound in one volume, cloth, gilt, 6d., to suit those who wish to possess this useful compendium in a handsome and convenient form. This was the only catechism we had in our Connexion until the recent issue from the pen of Mr. Petty, which is of a different order. His last work is a volume of about 500 pages, 12mo., price 3s. 6d., termed, "Biographical Sketches of some of those Preachers whose Labours Contributed to the Origination and Early Extension of the Primitive Methodist Connexion." His object in issuing this volume was to make known important facts, casting light on the birth and early extension of the Connexion, facts which but for his indefatigable efforts, would probably have remained unknown except to a few. The second edition of the work is now in the market, and contains information other works do not give.

We have seen that Mr. Herod had not an early religious training, or a liberal education; that he entered the missionary work at great temporal sacrifice, with the simple preparation of a suitable body, a renewed heart, and a quenchless zeal for the salvation of souls. He was also early invested with the office of superintending stations, which was perhaps a calamity to him, imperfectly furnished and constituted as was his mind; as had he for a few years longer been allowed to pursue the ordinary work of an evangelist, under well informed and judicious superintendents, who would have taken the chief discipline of the stations, keeping him in the calmer region of reading, study, and prayer, we are of opinion that he would have shone more brightly in the estimation of some. But when the man, and all the circumstances of his life and labours are impartially weighed in the scales of moral equity, we are forced to the conclusion, that Mr. Herod was a genuine child of God, whose heart was fully given to the work, and that he contributed largely to the purity and best interests of the community in which he was converted to God, and in which he remained with changeless fidelity until called by the Master to his reward in heaven.

JOHN PARROTT

[Having known Mr. Herod intimately for many years, having spent two years in the same station with him, besides having been repeatedly in neighbouring stations, having often met him at public services, and in official meetings, and having, moreover, assisted him in the preparation of several of his works for the press, we may claim to be in a position to judge of the correctness of the estimate given of his life and labours in the foregoing memoir. And it affords us a mournful pleasure to bear our testimony to the accuracy of this sketch of our old friend and fellow-labourer. Mr. H. had very marked infirmities of temper and judgment, but he meant well, and laboured hard and long in the service of the Connexion of his choice. "The best of men are but men at the best." He was greatly owned. of God in-his missionary labours, and many souls on earth and in heaven have cause to thank God that ever they heard him preach the Gospel. Both Mr. Parrott and other brethren have expressed the views of many persons, as well as their own, in the remarks above given. For sincere piety, for stern integrity, for indefatigable toil, and public usefulness, Mr. Herod deserves well of the church, Let us pity his failings and imitate his excellences. He is now at rest, and let all who may have seen occasion to differ from him allow their differences now to rest too; and let us rejoice in the thought that when we shall meet him again we shall one and all be free from those infirmities by which on earth our harmony may have been broken, and enjoy each other's society in the presence of that Saviour

who atoned for all our sins, who was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and knew how to sympathize with us in our trials, while he had patience with us all in our shortcomings. —ED.]

References

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