

Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by E. Powell

The subject of this memoir, who was the son of Mr. C. S. Mager, Edgar House, Bath, died at Chippenham, February 23rd, 1873, in the thirty-eighth year of his age. In his boyhood he attended the Wesleyan Chapel, and during several years of his youth he was a Sunday School scholar, and for three years after a teacher. In his seventeenth year he left home for Liverpool, where he stayed for some time, and eventually was brought into "the glorious liberty of the people of God." The reality of this change was evinced by his subsequent, decided piety, and loving zeal for the spiritual good of others, whether strangers to him or otherwise.

He became a local preacher with us at Liverpool. In 1859 he returned to Bath, and was recommended for the ministry; the following year he entered the itinerancy. Many tried to dissuade him from doing so, seeing he had a fair prospect of becoming wealthy; but being convinced he was called of God to preach the gospel, he sacrificed the prospect of the ease and wealth he might have possessed, and went in the name of his Master to Chippenham; afterwards he travelled on the following stations, Pontypool, Stroud, Redruth, Tredegar, Alveston, Pillawell. He was stationed a second time to Chippenham, but he was never able to take any part in the ministerial labours of the station.

His success as a travelling preacher was very considerable, many souls did he lead to Christ, and the circuits in which he laboured prospered. He was a man of a most amiable disposition, meek, and devout. He enjoyed religion, and was truly a godly man. The colleagues with whom he travelled found him to be a true brother, a delightful fellow-labourer, and an upright man.

The Rev. T. Hobson says:— "My first acquaintance with Rev. C.P. Mager was at Pontypool, when he travelled with me two years as colleague in the ministry. I had reason to believe that divine grace was deeply rooted in his heart, and his whole deportment was that of a Christian and a minister of Christ. As a preacher he was generally acceptable, and the end of his ministry, the conversion of sinners to God, was in a good degree accomplished. His natural temper, amiable in itself, was much improved and sweetened by divine grace. I always found him kind and obliging in all things. In his private walks of life he had much enjoyment in prayer and communion with God. In his moral deportment a conscientious regard to truth was seen in his daily conversation, and his attachment to the Connexion of his choice was firm and unflinching."

The Rev. J. P. Bellingham, who laboured with him on the Redruth station, bears the following testimony to his devotedness and worth:— "Our departed brother, the Rev. C.P. Mager, was an earnest worker. His greatness was not in the glowings of burning eloquence or pulpit oratory. His sermons were the clear intelligent utterances of an earnest man seeking the salvation of his hearers. His subjects generally were carefully prepared and written in a clear and neat style. Some ministers can do much in the pulpit, but not very much out of it. Brother Mager had much power out of the pulpit. As a colleague I always found him diligent in attending to little things. He was very earnest in the great duty of family visiting, and had a happy way of keeping the members together in peace. He worked very successfully with me in the Redruth circuit, and in following him round the circuit I always found that he had been at the respective places in time to visit a number of families before preaching. The Camborne Society, the place of his residence, prospered under his management, and he was greatly respected by the members. He was a man of deep piety, strong sympathy, and a laborious worker. I had the great pleasure and privilege of having him for a colleague in the Tredegar circuit, where he laboured three years. We suffered severely in consequence of the agitated state of the trade, and the strikes in the neighbourhood. But I was happy in having a colleague who willingly shared with me the heavy responsibilities and onerous duties of that extensive station; and one who in all the heavily burdened chapel cases, cheerfully toiled, and begged, and gave, to sustain and liberate them. He was then a hale strong man, and had the prospect of many years of toil and

usefulness in the Master's Vineyard. But his strong constitution gave way beneath the heavy toils and anxieties of his after stations."

His illness was protracted and trying, being "Laryngean Phthisis;" he suffered much from shortness of breath and a bad cough, but bore all with the utmost resignation and patience. No murmur escaped his lips, he longed to live only that he might "go about doing good." He endeared himself to all who knew him. One friend from the last station he laboured on, in a letter of condolence to his poor bereaved wife, says:—

"Your dear husband was one whom the Church, or the world, or the family could ill spare, and it seems (but only seems) a contradiction to those wants, that he should have been removed. Yet, my dear friend, you know, and I know, that our Father doeth all things well."

He paid a visit to the neighbourhood of Swansea, hoping that the change might effect some improvement in his health. While here, I had the pleasure of his company, and found him the same cheerful, hopeful, trusting Christian, I had ever known. He was anxious to get well, that he might publish the story of the Cross, and gather souls to Christ. He literally dragged himself to his station, and seemed determined to live and work. But the Master said, "It is enough, you must witness for me to the last in the furnace;" and the servant resignedly said, "Thy will, O Lord, thy will be done." He lingered on month after month, impressing all who came near him with the sweetness of his disposition, and the beauty of his life in Christ. His medical attendants were so drawn towards him, and loved him so much that anything and everything he could desire or wish for during his illness they supplied him with; and after his death they called in several times to look on his cold form and said, "We loved him. He was one of the best men we ever attended. It was a pleasure to enter his room, and see his sweet smile of welcome." Both of them are members of the Episcopal Church. They cheerfully gave their attendance gratuitously. The Christian ministers in Chippenham entertained the highest opinion of the true work of our departed brother, and the Rev. W.E. Darby (Independent), comforted Mrs. Mager, in her bereavement, in a long letter of truly Christian sympathy in which he bears the following testimony to the Christian character of our dear friend:—

"I never saw any one exhibit so much Christian fortitude and cheerfulness. It really was marvellous that he should be able to do so under the circumstances. And yet, I know not why; for does not God give more of his own strength and joy as he is about to take us into his larger life? And as we get nearer to him, and the vision of his glory, does not, must not, our trust in him for those who are left behind, increase? I do not wonder at this cheerfulness, for his life was hid with Christ in God. I only pray that we may be like him in spirit, when like him we stand on the shore of the river."

We saw him for the last time on the 17th of February, nearing the promised land; his hope blooming, his prospects bright, his confidence strong. We parted with him in sight of the land. His end was peace—the valley was illumined. Often during the last few hours of his life he spoke of the glory which awaited him. The last word audibly spoken was Jesus. Thus most calmly on a Sabbath morn our dear brother entered his rest. He shall shine as a star for ever and ever, for he turned many to righteousness.

He is interred in the Locksbrook Cemetery, both one of the most picturesque and beautiful burial places in the county of Somersetshire. Funeral sermons were preached for him in Bath and Chippenham, and the general impression was that a great, because a good man, had fallen in Israel. May his sorrowing widow find all the consolation a widow's God can give on earth, and then join his pure spirit in the land of light, who for a few years was her faithful and devoted partner in the wilderness.

References

Primitive Methodist Magazine 1874/110