

Reminiscences Relative to Summit

Transcription of Article in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by B.W. (probably Barnabas Wild)

THE article in the November magazine, 1903, relative to Summit, has stirred my memory and touched my heart. The pictures of the "old room," old houses, and the two photos, have brought to mind persons and scenes of my early life. What glorious meetings we had in that old room. How vividly I seem to see the Revs. S. Smith, J. Clewer, M. Lee, G. Kidd, and G. Herod, and remember some of the powerful sermons they preached. Though neither large nor beautiful, yet from that room have gone forth influences for good that are still in operation and are spreading over the world. I was present when Mary Travis and her sister were at the penitent form, and for a while they were members of my class which met in the house of "Ould" Grace. The revival of 1854, during the ministry of the Rev. J. Standrin, was to all human appearance productive of the greatest amount of visible and permanent good, but there were others before it worthy of note. Those revivals were carried on by the ordinary means. There were no attractive and sensational advertisements, and no special revivalists from some distance, but the minister and local preachers of the circuit. Two powerful meetings come to mind when Mr. J. Sutcliffe, now of Great Western street, Manchester, was the preacher. The converting power came down and sinners were saved. The good work that was carried on in 1842 and 1846 was productive of great good. Many of the converts joined other churches, and some of them became leading officials therein. In thinking of the religious work at Summit I have been taught not to think lightly of the conversion of the young. One Sunday evening in 1842 a few children were at the penitent form. There was much rejoicing and no small noise. An old member left the meeting saying "What needless fuss and noise about a few lads and lasses. They don't know what they are doing, and in a few days it will all pass away." One of the boys was Reuben Wild; and the steadiness, earnestness, laboriousness, and liberality manifested from that time till his death in 1900 were the fruit. B. Wild was another of the boys, and though he did not get converted that night, the influence of that meeting never entirely left him. Another thing is the importance of putting forth individual effort to save men. Shortly after R. Wild's conversion, he felt moved to speak to a boy who worked at the same print works, respecting his soul's welfare. Having a holiday, he invited him to go with him to a tea meeting at Knowlwood. He complied with the invitation. A speech delivered at that meeting by the Rev. T. Newell, at that time a local preacher, induced the youth to decide for Christ, and A. Sagar henceforth regarded Mr. Newell as his father in Christ. A. Sagar was a youth of considerable promise. He was a good singer, had a ready utterance, a capacious memory, and great courage. He was soon set to work in the Sunday school, and then put on the plan as a local preacher. He had not much time for self-culture, for he had to work from six in the morning till eight, nine, or ten at night. One of the hymns and tunes I heard him singing one night, as he was returning home while I was in bed, has been ringing in my head these last two days, though I have not heard it sung for more than fifty years. A. Sagar became popular as a local preacher, and entered our ministry on the Isle of Man. His health failing, he resigned the ministry and for a while was the most popular lay preacher on the island. But supposing R. Wild had not spoken to him and accompanied him to the tea and meeting, it would have altered his whole career. Are there not many lost for want of a kind word and invitation to the house of prayer?

While reviewing the past I have been led to think of the value of prayer, secret and social. Our old class leader drew us all out to pray, first in the class meetings, then in the public prayer meeting. At

one time there was not a member but what engaged in public prayer. And what prayers they were! They were real, not a mere form; the outflowing of the sincere desires of the heart, not the mere utterance of words; and prevalent, for “power from on high” often descended in answer thereto. Haste again ye days of grace!

References

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