

**William Clemitson**

*Preacher of the Gospel*

**Transcription of Poem in the Christian Messenger**

Fine, genial face, white hair and air alert,  
Who never had been sluggish all his life;  
With mind and heart in joyous full concert,  
Yet loving peace and always hating strife.

A man of fire and eloquent of speech,  
He credit did his native Allendale;  
Few would forget if once they heard him preach  
Nor fail in after years to tell the tale.

What striking similies he often used  
That fixed some truth forever in the mind!  
What gleams of light and love he oft diffused!  
For he was always true and ever kind.

A very gentle knight who could not brook  
What touched his freedom or infringed his right;  
Yet sooner suffer wrong than seem to look  
As if he thought of right as less than might.

Then men were poor and preachers poorer still,  
Small thought could be of preaching for mere pelf;  
He all the same would work with heart and will  
For others caring more than for himself.

The salaries small and journeys often long,  
With weeks perhaps away from wife and home;  
No wonder some whose zeal was not so strong  
Gave up the work and ceased henceforth to roam.

Fellow-dalesmen found him just a brother,  
Talking lingo as to the manner born;  
He was kindly and could be none other  
To all indeed whom he had found forlorn.

For half the night he oft would fight for breath,  
To asthma he a martyr was for long,  
Then preach next day as one who scoffed at death,  
And over illness triumphed with a song.

To his native Dale he came to travel,  
And walked again the old familiar roads;  
The prophet's honour to make men marvel.  
And bravely tackled many heavy loads.

A little boy upon the hearthrug sits.  
Then jumps upright just where he lowly sat,  
As through the door a stranger swiftly flits  
And shouts his joyous greeting from the mat:

"Just the best i' the hoose! " was what he said,  
Through all the years the boy remembers still,  
Full five-and-sixty years since then have fled,  
But never has forgot, nor ever will.

As well or ill, as rich or poor, he bore,  
The Christian badge alike in peace or strife,  
And to the end that Allendonian wore  
The white flower of a fair and blameless life.

R. J. H.

#### References

*Christian Messenger* 1921/370