THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY
OF THE
PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH.
THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY
OF THE
PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH

BY THE
REV. H. B. KENDALL, B.A.

Vol. II.

London:
EDWIN DALTON: 48—50 ALDERSGATE STREET, E.C.
EXPERIENCE, temperament and policy all combined to make Hugh Bourne publisher and pressman. His character had been shaped and a new direction given to his life by the printed word. Though naturally taciturn and, like Moses, "not eloquent . . . but slow of speech and of a slow tongue," he was communicative through another medium than that of speech. All along he obeyed a pretty steady impulse to express himself in manuscript and type—to externalise his own convictions and his impressions of the facts before him, as his life-long journalising, and his innumerable memoranda respecting past and current events clearly show. In all this he was the direct opposite of William Clowes, who was averse from the use of the pen. For him the inside of a printing-office had few attractions, yet, like Aaron, he was naturally eloquent, and could "speak well." Moreover, as a practical man, Hugh Bourne knew what power there was in the press as an instrument of propagandism; and, as one of the founders and directors of a new denomination, he may have had the ambition to copy, in his own modest way, the example of John Wesley—whom he so much admired—who was one of the most voluminous authors and extensive publishers of his own, or indeed of any, time. So Hugh Bourne's publications ranged from a somewhat bulky Ecclesiastical History to a four-page collection of "Family Receipts," which tells how to relieve a cow choked with a turnip, and how to provide a cheap and wholesome travelling dinner for fourpence. Whence, it will be seen, that the doings of Popes and Councils as well as the small details of domestic and personal economy, alike came within the purview of his printed observations.

These characteristics and habits may be seen at work in Hugh Bourne even before 1811. In proof of this, note the printed account of the first camp meeting, hot from the press, that was scattered by thousands; the "Rules for Holy Living" distributed on camp-grounds, and even slipped through the broken panes of Church windows; his
“Scripture Catechism,” 1807—not half as well known as it deserves to be; and his tract on “The Ministry of Women,” 1808. Note, above all, in this introductory period, his adaptation of Lorenzo Dow’s Hymn Book, 1809, of which, until 1823, edition after edition was published, being bought so eagerly, especially on new ground, that the revenue derived from its sale helped largely to sustain some of the new missions. Some of the provincial printers—wide-awake men—soon discovered the value of this little Hymn Book as a marketable commodity, and issued pirated editions, sometimes making trivial alterations, and then having the effrontery to put “Copyright secured” on the title-page. We ourselves have met with no less than eight such pirated editions issued before 1823, bearing the imprints of local presses at York (two), Leeds, Gainsborough, Selby, Burslem, Bingham, and Nottingham.

After the establishment of the Connexion in 1811, Hugh Bourne pursued the same policy. Printed tickets superseded written ones. In 1814, the rules of the new denomination were carefully edited and published; Sunday Schools were with much labour furnished with Bibles and reading-books, and other requisites; Tract Societies were organised and equipped; a large Hymn Book was compiled and published in 1812, but it met with little favour among the societies. It was too heavy to float, and it must be regarded as having been one of Hugh Bourne’s publishing ventures that failed. The same fate befell the quarterly Magazine, projected and launched for a very short voyage in 1818.

To all intents and purposes, there was an Editor and Book Steward before the offices were officially created and the officers appointed. If, at first, Hugh Bourne practically combined both offices in himself, it must not be overlooked that his brother James was always at his back ready to share his monetary responsibility; and, to the honour of both, let it also be remembered that, though at their initiative the societies might authorise these early publishing ventures, the brothers did not appropriate any profits that might accrue, but surrendered them to the Connexion, while they took all the risks of loss. Thus, one thinks, it was a foregone conclusion that when the first Conference found it necessary to appoint an editor Hugh Bourne should be designated to the office, and receive instructions to complete the suspended issue of the Magazine of 1819—which he did in the manner already described. But when at the next Conference the question of appointing a Book Steward was mooted, the case was different; there were evidently two opinions both as to the person to be appointed and as to the locale of the Book-Room already looming on the Connexional horizon.
“60. Q. Who shall be Book Steward?
   A. If the Magazines are printed in Hull Circuit, E. Taylor. If in Tunstall Circuit, J. Bourne.”

If there were any rivalry between the two circuits for the honour of having the book-room within its borders—as we strongly suspect there was—it was soon ended in favour of Tunstall; for, at the Conference of 1821, in answer to the question: “How shall the Book Concern be managed?” it was resolved:—

“James Steele, James Bourne, Hugh Bourne, Charles John Abraham, and John Hancock, are elected as a Book Committee to manage the concerns for the ensuing year. These are to receive and examine all matters to be inserted in the Magazine, and all other matters which it may be necessary to print. H. Bourne is appointed Editor, and J. Bourne Book Steward; and the Committee are at liberty to receive matter from W. O’Bryan, and to insert in the Magazine from time to time, such of it as they may think proper. The Committee are empowered to establish a General Book-Room, and a printing press for the use of the Connexion.”

This incidental reference to the founder of the Bible Christian Church is historically interesting; and, with his usual acuteness, Hugh Bourne points out in the Magazine for 1821, the remarkable similarity between the two denominations as regards their practical recognition of the ministry of females. Referring to Joel’s prophecy (ii. 28–29), he says:—

“In the latter part of the promise which respects daughters and handmaidens prophesying, or preaching, a remarkable coincidence has taken place in our Connexion, and in the Connexion which arose in Cornwall. It is really surprising that the two Connexions, without any knowledge of each other, should each, nearly at the same time, be led in the same way, as it respects the ministry of women. Both Connexions employed women as exhorters, and as local and travelling preachers. When the two Connexions became acquainted with each other, and found so striking a similarity in their proceedings with regard to female preachers, it became a matter of desire to know by what steps each Connexion had been led into the measure. This produced a request on the subject, to which the following letter was sent as an answer, etc.”

But to return to the Book Committee. Hull had lost the Book-Room, and was to develop itself in its own splendid way, while Tunstall was, for some years to come, to become more and more the directive centre. Yet, though Hull acquiesced in the arrangement, its delegates, we are told, asked that, until the necessary printing plant had been acquired for the Connexion, the Magazines might be printed by “their own printer” at Hull—probably J. Hutchinson. The Conference granted the request and hence, H. Bourne says: “he had to attend at Hull and bore his own expenses.” But this arrangement certainly did not last long, for the last number of the 1821 Magazine, at least, was printed at the Connexional printing-office at Bemersley: so that the work of printing the first two volumes of the Magazine was executed by five different printers, residing in as many different towns—to wit: Leicester, Burslem, Derby, Hull, and Bemersley! What is now the Aldersgate Primitive Methodist Magazine has had a long and, on the whole, a prosperous voyage, but at the outset the sea was choppy and unkindly, and the bark had its mishaps.
While the brothers Bourne are looking after the purchase of printing-presses and founts of type and a suitable place to put them in, we will just glance at the members of the Book Committee and its functions. As to the latter: Here, as everywhere, there has been evolution, so that it were indeed an error—though one easily fallen into—to suppose that our ecclesiastical courts must have been from the beginning just what they are now. At first the Book Committee was a General Committee as well; and for a year or two, in conjunction with the General Committee at Hull, it had to give advice and counsel to the circuits, and send a deputation to settle matters when desired. The Conference Minutes of 1822 even go on to say: "If the two committees think that there is a providential opening, they shall institute, or take steps to institute,

J. Hancock's House and Engraver's Shop.

a missionary establishment for sending out missionaries in a general way." The mode of editing the Magazine prescribed was certainly a peculiar one. Communications were not to be addressed to the Editor personally, but to the Book Committee, which had to decide upon the suitability or otherwise of the contributions sent. Contributions from the circuits had also to receive the endorsement of their Circuit Committees; so that the Magazine was to be both supplied with matter and edited by committees. As the contributions chiefly desired and expected were memoirs, preachers' Journals, and revival intelligence, this curious arrangement was evidently designed to prevent puffery and self-advertisement, and to secure authentic reports. These regulations were soon relaxed so far as contributors were concerned, but there is evidence to show that,
throughout the Bemersley period, the Editor edited through his committee, and John Flesher found this out when he entered upon his new duties at Bemersley, which is a later story. In 1824, we read:—"The Book Committee have now nothing to do with the general concerns of the Connexion." Further, it is to be noted of the Book Committee, that for many years it was also the Committee of Privileges; small in the number of its members, and appointed separately from the other committees. In 1850 the Committee of Privileges is the same as the General Committee, and in 1863 we have the significant statement: "The Book Committee shall be composed of the General Committee." This arrangement obtained until 1894, when again a special Book Committee was appointed. Though this chapter deals with the Bemersley Book-Room period, we have thought it better, for the sake of gaining a connected view, to follow the Book Committee in its latest evolution.

As to the personnel of the first Book Committee: John Hancock and C. J. Abraham are the only members of the Committee we are not already familiar with. Both were leading men in the Tunstall Circuit through the whole of this period, and the former especially, as the corresponding member of the General Committee, for many years wielded considerable influence. He was a member—and an active one—of the Book Committee until his death, which took place on January 2nd, 1843. Born in 1796, he was an engraver by trade, though later on in life he became largely interested in the manufacture of pottery. He is said to have been savingly enlightened by reading Thomas Aquinas, "The Angelic Doctor"—probably a unique experience for a Primitive Methodist. He was converted in 1814, and joined the class of James Steele. The society at Pitt’s Hill was his special sphere of labour, and after his death it was frequently remarked: "He was the first leader of Pitt's Hill, the first in raising the old chapel, he laid the first stone of the new chapel, preached the first sermon within its walls, and was the first whose mortal remains were interred in its burial-ground."*

C. J. Abraham is already known to us as the druggist of Burslem who, probably about this time, became the husband of Ann Brownsword. The names of both stand on the Tunstall Plan, and Ann Abraham, especially, was much esteemed as a deeply pious and acceptable preacheress. C. J. Abraham, like J. Hancock, was, both locally and connexionally, a leading official throughout the whole of the Bemersley régime being an active member of the General as well as of the Book Committee. He was a trustee of the first Burslem Chapel in Navigation Road, as well as of Zoar Chapel, acquired in 1842, though it was not used by the Burslem Society until two years later. It was the trust responsibilities connected with these two properties which were the cause of so much anxiety to Hugh Bourne in his later years, when the affairs of his brother and of C. J. Abraham had become hopelessly involved.

Bemersley Farm, the home of the Bournes, was the place selected for the first Book-Room. We would like to picture Bemersley as a whole, and Bemersley Farm in particular. We naturally feel an interest in a place which, for twenty years, was one of the foci—we may even say the focal point—of our connexional life; the spot where the central wheel of management was set up. As though, then, we were one of those many pilgrims, who during those twenty years visited for the first time a spot they

* "A Memoir of Mr. J. Hancock, of Tunstall," by Frederick Brown (Tunstall, 1843).
had long heard of but had never seen, we approach it from a distance, and take in the general features of the landscape before we seek to gain a nearer and, if we can, an interior view of the Connexional Book Establishment. The description given by the local historian may help us to this general view of the hamlet of Bemersley and its surroundings; for, although it is Bemersley as it was at the end of the eighteenth century he describes, its main features must, in 1822, have undergone little alteration.

"Bemersley is about a mile north-west of Norton Church, and near three miles from Tunstall—almost entirely moorland. Old Bemersley Farm stood on a hill that overlooked the landscape on either side, and many a dale and valley and wood did this ancient house command from its eminence. Looking at the scenery to-day, it requires little discernment to perceive how wild and rugged the place must have been in 1772. On one side lay the Valley of the Potteries, but the smoke and the bustle were hidden in the distance; and on the other the view stretched away over the great moorlands. There were three or four farm-houses dating from the sixteenth century, about the same number of cottage houses, and at the remote part of the hamlet stood Greenway Hall. Round this old house there was a large park and extensive game preserves."

Bemersley Farm stood by the roadside some little distance from Bemersley. The visitor saw nothing in the outward aspect of the building to give it any distinction above other buildings of its kind. "It had nothing of the world's glory." It was but an ordinary farm-house with the usual appurtenances—fold-yard, barn, and stables. Here lived the Editor and the Book Steward, who had to adapt the buildings to their new purposes. James Bourne, therefore, laid out before May, 1823, the sum of £373 8s. 10d. in the purchase of a printing-press, type, and other printer's plant, and bookbinder's tools and materials as well, as we may
infer from the entry in the Conference Minutes: "That it be recommended to the circuits to get their binding done at the Book-Room, if the Book-Room can get it done as well and as cheap as elsewhere." In one of the farm-buildings adjoining the house, the printing-press and a few cases of type were set up, and the Conference "Minutes" of 1822 have the imprint: "Bemersley near Tunstall:—Printed at the Office of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, by J. Bourne;" whereas the Minutes of 1821 say: "J. Hutchinson, Printer, Silver Street, Hull."

The Book-Room proper consisted of a detached rectangular building of the Barnic order of architecture, and plain even for a barn. As shown in our picture, it was pierced with few windows and sparsely provided with doors. Some of the walls of this building were lined with shelves divided into pens, in which the magazines and hymn books, small pamphlets and books—of which the most popular was the "Journals of John Nelson"—were stowed until the bi-monthly packing-day came round, when a gentle ripple of excitement went through the establishment. The bulk of the parcels were conveyed in carts to the canal-quays and shipped in boats to the various circuits.

Besides the two chief officers, there were resident a bailiff of the small farm, a journeyman, and an apprentice, and the son of James Bourne, who it is said worked in the printing-office, saying nothing of Mrs. Bourne and two maids. About the year 1836, John Hallam was added to the establishment. His position was a somewhat peculiar one; for, after 1836, his name is not found on the stations for a term of years, though he is one of the members of the Book and General Committees. The explanation is, that by his hearty acceptance of Hugh Bourne's views and methods of work, and by his laborious and successful ministry, he had ingratiated himself with the Editor, and he being now in 1836 in very indifferent health, Hugh Bourne had installed him at Bemersley as his assistant, and had induced his brother to make him his assistant also, Mr. Hallam's salary being paid out of the private purse of the brothers. In this way John Hallam acquired great influence at the Book-Room and in the administration of Connexional affairs, even before the year 1843, when he was officially appointed Book Steward. It should also be said that Mr. George Baron, of Silsden, who often acted as Connexional Auditor, frequently paid visits to the Book-Room during this period, and that his business aptitude proved of great assistance to James Bourne. In 1840, the late Rev. Thomas Baron went to Bemersley to take the place of his brother for a short time, and, in his interesting reminiscences of that visit, he tells how it was his duty, early each week-day morning, to carry the post-bag with the Book-Room's letters for dispatch, two miles distance, to Norton, and to call at a public-house for letters which were left there for the Book-Room. Mr. Baron gives us a pleasant glimpse of the interior economy of the establishment: of the regular and reverent daily devotions, of the meals in common, of the hospitality afforded to the ministers who frequently visited the

MR. G. BARON.
Book-Room, and even to the goodly number who came from other societies to attend the Quarterly Lovefeast. What is still more interesting, we get a glimpse into the Editor’s own room, where, when back from his not infrequent journeys, he attended to the duties of his office.

“When at home he was generally busily engaged in editing or writing matter for the Magazines and in Connexional correspondence. His study was a good-sized room, fitted with shelves for his library. Among the books in it there was a complete well-bound set, from the beginning, of the Arminian and Wesleyan Magazines. The first volume contained a somewhat lengthy preface, neatly written and signed by John Wesley in his own handwriting. It is to be feared that the volumes have been scattered or lost. Had they been kept together they would now have been an interesting and valuable relic. Among other books in the library were a number of Wesley’s and Fletcher’s Works, Adam Clarke’s Commentary, Gillie’s “Historical Collections,” Finney’s “Lectures,” Hebrew and Greek Lexicons, etc. [and these were for use, not ornament]. In the cold weather, a screen was placed in this room, behind which the venerable man was often quietly seated before a writing-table, busily seeking to stir up others in the work so near his own heart—that of the conversion of sinners.” *

Such, then, was our first Book-Room. Thomas Bateman was a passing pilgrim here in May, 1824. He was on his way with George Taylor to attend the District Meeting at Ramsor to be held in Francis Horobin’s house. The District Meeting was expected to be an unusually important one, as the rules had to be revised, and far-reaching changes introduced specially relating to district formation and representation. Hence, Thomas Bateman had been pressed to attend. He had stopped the night with James Nixon, whom he had accompanied to his class with much profit to himself. Then, John Hancock—whom he now met for the first time—had looked in, and read him a lecture for having declined to preach special services at Pitt’s Hill—John Hancock’s own favourite society—alleging that ordinary services must always give way for special ones. And now, the wayfarers—for they walked the whole distance to Ramsor—had called at Bemersley, having noted all the places of historic interest to Primitive Methodists as they went along. At Bemersley a short time was spent in looking round, and Thomas Bateman indulged in “numerous reflections on the place and its surroundings on which an angel might pause and wonder.”

Sentimental reflections are here pardonable enough; but the most obvious reflection called up by the view of the Bemersley Book-Room is that which Thomas Bateman himself suggests. That the important District Meeting of 1824—which we may

venture to say was a rehearsal of the proceedings of the Conference—was held in the room of a farmhouse in a secluded hamlet in one of the most secluded parts of Staffordshire, was a fact just as remarkable as that the Connexional Book-Room should be located in the farm-buildings of another Staffordshire hamlet. Both facts were remarkable, and yet natural; for they show in a very striking way, what other consentient facts also show; that we were as yet largely a village community and, further, that considering the area up to this-time occupied by Primitive Methodism—embracing the country we have already surveyed—the location of the Book-Room was fairly central, and not inappropriate. By 1843 this will be no longer true, as John Flesher will soon learn when he comes to take up his editorial duties at Bemersley.

But why was Thomas Bateman never a member of the Book Committee, and not even a member of the General Committee until 1839? This question is worth considering in its relation to the Bemersley period of our history. It is fortunate that we can here let Thomas Bateman answer for himself. Writing of this same Ramsor District Meeting of 1824, he says:—

“There was much business—all peaceable; but I did not feel in my proper element. I believe at present God has not sent me either to baptise or legislate, but to preach the Gospel. And though much deference was shown to me by the brethren, I feel no wish ever to attend another such meeting: and after much thought, believing as I did that my friend Taylor had a special call and was well qualified for such work, I resolved never to attend another District Meeting or Conference so long as he lived and could attend, unless I had some special call to do so. [And he kept his resolve and was not present at District Meeting or Conference until after 1837, but made up for it afterwards.]”

Writing fifty-seven years after, he repeats the statement here made, but further adds what is germane to our purpose:—

“From this cause [the keeping of this resolve] my name seldom appeared in the Minutes or otherwise as affecting Connexional movements. Still, no change of any moment took place without my being consulted, and I was always ready to give the best advice I could, which was always received with the greatest cordiality.”

We believe the words we have italicised to be true to their very last iota, and that, though Thomas Bateman was apparently in the background through the greater part of the first period, we must put him in the very forefront of the men—most of whom we know—who guided the revolutions of the central wheel of management. We do not forget such prominent Tunstall District men as Thomas Wood, the Brownhills, R. Mayer, the first Primitive Methodist Mayor of Newcastle-under-Lyne, and others already mentioned. Even before he was fully committed to the Connexion, Hugh Bourne was drawn to young Bateman. He read him portions of the History of the Connexion he was then busy with. He opened his mind freely to him concerning the forthcoming Magazine, and asked him to become a contributor; and to the very end of Hugh
Bourne's life, there was no man who had more influence with, and over, him than the quiet, sagacious, forciblec-speaking farmer and surveyor of Chorley. 

We must now proceed to chronicle some of the more important transactions of the Bemersley Book Committee. First in order among these, were those relating to the Hymn Book. It seems gradually to have been borne into the mind of Hugh Bourne that the Revival Hymn Book was a valuable property worth preserving. Therefore, in 1821, he resolved to copyright the book. To enable him to do this he himself composed some original hymns, and Poet Sanders was asked to do the same—for a consideration. There exists a curious document, worth giving in extenso, in which William Sanders, in precise legal form, contracts to furnish twenty-five original hymns for the same number of shillings.

"Received March 1821, of Hugh Bourne, the sum of twenty-five shillings, for twenty-five hymns, which by contract were composed by me for his use, and which I have made over to him in the fullest sense of the word, and which from this time become and are in every sense his own absolute property. The first line and metre, and number of verses of each are as follow:—1st. C. M., four verses, beginning—'Alas! how soon the body dies'; and so it continues to the 25th, P. M.—eight verses—Camp-meeting Farewell—'Dear Brethren and Sisters in Jesus, Farewell.' I say received by me,

"William Sanders."

The wisdom of the protective measures taken was seen in 1823, when a printer at York named Kendrew, who had infringed the copyright of the Hymn Book, was brought to his knees. The law was set in motion, but Kendrew capitulated before the case went into court, and signed an agreement pledging himself not to repeat the offence, to pay all the costs incurred, and to surrender all copies of the unauthorised edition in his possession. The Committee having gained its object, which was to vindicate its rights and safeguard the interests of the Connexion, could now afford to be generous. Hence the stringency of the last condition was somewhat relaxed, and it was agreed to pay Kendrew a certain sum on each surrendered copy of the Hymn Book. The Conference held at Leeds this same year (1823) directed that "a large standard Hymn Book should be prepared and printed at the Book-Room, for the general use of the Connexion." Evidently it was felt that even the improved edition of 1821, with its one hundred and fifty-four hymns, was inadequate to meet the growing demands of church-life. A book was called for which should "contain Hymns for the sacraments and for the general varieties of meetings and worship." The Minutes of 1823 go on to say that "the new book is expected to be got ready by the close of the present year, or early in the next year." With 1824, then, began the reign of the Large and Small Hymn Book (bound together) which served the uses of the Church until 1853, when John Flesher was instructed to compile a new Hymn Book. The Preface to the Large Hymn Book claims that it has been "compiled from the best authors, and enriched with original hymns," and that "the original hymns were of a superior cast." With his eye on this alleged "superior cast," a friendly critic has written—evidently with regret:—

"We look in vain among the original hymns . . . for one that has survived
the test of three-quarters of a century's wear; posterity, we grieve to say, did not find in them the ethereal quality of an immortal hymn. We wish that there had been at least one sweet singer for all Churches, and for all time, among the band of consecrated single-hearted men, who did so much for British working men at the beginning of this century."

Now, though it scarcely falls within our province to discuss the literary merits or demerits of our early hymn books, a word or two may be said. It may be that no one has given us a hymn dowered with immortality, and which has made its way into almost every Hymnary. That may be conceded. But there are two hymns—both said to be the joint production of Hugh Bourne and W. Sanders—we would speak up for, or rather, let them speak for themselves—"My soul is now united," which first appeared in the 1821 Collection, and especially, "Hark! the gospel news is sounding," in the Large Hymn Book. These have worn well, and are not worn out yet. For open-air purposes there is no better, more stirring hymn than this latter; it has well been called, "The Primitive Methodist Grand March." These, and others that might be named, are incomparably better than some of the jingles that have had considerable vogue in these later days. The best defence, however, we have to offer for the old hymns is, that "they served their generation by the will of God," and some of them at least, like the two named, have not yet fallen on sleep. They had the power to arouse attention and nourish the spiritual life. "Hark! the gospel news is sounding," was once being sung, at the dusk of eventide, in a little hamlet.

"A young man, full of spiritual anxiety, was leaning on a wall in the distance, and heard the joyous strains of the refrain: 'None need perish.' A responsive faith awoke in his soul; peace came; he dedicated his life to Jesus, and is now a minister of the Connexion. Again: 'By the singing of this soul-stirring hymn ['My soul is now united'] at a lovefeast near Pocklington, in 1822, eighteen souls surrendered to Jesus Christ and found peace!"†

Could even "Lead, kindly Light" do more than this?

In 1824, the *Children’s Magazine* was begun. Though this venture was entered upon with no little anxiety, it proved from the very first a signal success. The demand greatly exceeded expectations; so much so, that several impressions had to be printed, until seven thousand copies had been struck off, and the monthly circulation reached six thousand. We have pleasure in giving a reproduction of the first page of the first number of this excessively rare publication.

As we all know, “Take care of the children” was the life-long solicitude and dying charge of Hugh Bourne. In his case it amounted to a passion, and became one of his most strongly-marked characteristics. Nor was he slow in urging upon others the same solicitude for bringing the young under the influence of Christian truth. Age wrought no abatement of his zeal; and hence, probably the last separate production that came from his pen, bore the title:


What has been said of the early Hymn Books equally holds good of the early Magazines: they were suitable for their time and for the purpose they had to fulfil. This may safely be said, as it also may, that what sufficed in 1823 had its obvious shortcomings twenty years later, and would never do now. Other times; other Magazines. Undoubtedly the Magazines of the Bemersley period helped to cement the circuits of the Connexion together, and to promote the work of God. The revival intelligence they contained, the biographies, the occasional articles on “Providence,” “Faith,” “Conversation-gift” etc., would do much to stimulate and to inform their readers. It is wonderful, considering his many journeyings, and the amount of other work he did, that Hugh Bourne fulfilled his editorial duties as well as he did fulfil them. We cannot help remarking, too, how widely divergent have been the estimates formed of his intellectual capabilities and performances. Our own opinion is that, as to these, he has been often under-rated. He had his oddities and weaknesses, and especially in later years, his infirmities of temper, but he had an alert and vigorous mind, and he could write in a way that made it impossible for any one to mistake his meaning. By choice he habited his thoughts in homespun. Some gifted men, who clothed their thoughts in Johnsonian garb, have interpreted his homespun as a sign of intellectual poverty. Never was there a greater mistake. His thought’s expression was not cast in the customary moulds of verbal form. It was rugged, even uncouth, as though hewn from granite: but there it is—outstanding, clear, and unmistakable.

Even the ablest and most heaven-sent editor may find his work a difficult one, just because so many of his readers think it so easy. Allowing for this, and also allowing for the advancing intelligence of the Connexion through the Twenties and Thirties, which went on creating wants not fully satisfied, we are not surprised to find in the old Minute Books evidence that the *Magazine* was sometimes criticised, and that proposals were made for its improvement. Especially was this so in such centres of light and

* The only copy we have seen is one given by H. Bourne himself to Rev. W. R. Widdowson.
leading as Nottingham and Hull. In proof of this take the following resolutions passed at the Nottingham Circuit Quarterly Meeting, 1827:—

"March 19th. Res. 50. 'That there be an improvement in the Magazine. That it be an octavo size, price sixpence and improved in matter."

"(60). That every preacher be required to write four pages per year.

"(61). That there be three editors." [And then the 'three' is crossed out and 'two' over-written.]

So also at Hull, in March, 1830, the Quarterly Meeting discussed the Magazines and came to the conclusion that "they ought to contain more original articles," and requested "each preacher [in 1830 there were twenty-four in Hull Circuit] who could, to write at least one page per month."

As we turn over the leaves of the old Conference Minutes, we meet with many reminders of the changed conditions which time has brought about, and we get the impression that the first Book Committee was composed of careful, managing men who were fertile in resource. The Conference of 1823 recommended that a depository of books obtained from the Book Room should be formed in every circuit. The money in the first instance was to be taken out of past profits and supplemented, if need be, by subscriptions. A circuit with one preacher was to take three pounds' worth of goods; a circuit with two preachers, six pounds worth, and so on in proportion. The Station Book Steward, who it must be remembered was not necessarily a travelling preacher, was to see to the carrying out of this recommendation. In 1824, Hugh Bourne felt it necessary to ask the Conference to allow him four pounds a quarter as salary, and ten shillings a week for board and lodging—a young man's salary. History says that there was one person of considerable talking-power at the Conference who thought it his duty to oppose this modest request; but it was granted notwithstanding, the objector being in a hopeless minority. In 1827, a scheme for the starting of a "Preachers' Magazine," on which Hugh Bourne had set his heart, was broached. In answer to the question, "What shall be done in relation to the Magazine?" it was resolved:

"One number in duodecimo shall be published, and if it does not pay its way, Hugh Bourne has agreed to bear the loss. But if it take so large a circulation as to do more than pay its way, the profits must not go to H.B. but to the Connexion. Also a succession of Ns. may be published if there be an opening."

A succession of numbers sufficient to make up one volume did appear, but there were no profits for the Connexion; and Hugh Bourne was permitted to make up the deficiency.

In 1833, what in the Minutes is usually termed "the cross-providence" overtook the Book-Room. On Good Friday Eve, 1833, the Book-Room took fire. How it originated no one knew; "whether from the fire that dried the paper or from the snuff of a candle." Damage to the extent of £1,900 was caused, involving, about equally, the private property of the Book Steward and that belonging to the Connexion. At that time, James Bourne was a man of considerable means, and it is recorded: "J. B. desires nothing for that portion of the loss which belonged to him; but hopeth that in
time, by the kind providence of God, he may surmount it." A levy of one penny per member was imposed in order to make good this loss of Connexional property. Sixty years after, the Book-Room, then standing, as it now stands, within the "conflagration area" of Central London, was within measurable distance of having a second experience of the like kind, but tenfold worse in degree. But this time a favourable Providence saved the goodly pile from disaster. While anxiety was reflected on the flame-lit countenances of the Book Steward and his staff, a change in the direction of the wind averted what seemed to be the impending catastrophe.

How and why the Book-Room got from Bemersley into the roar of Central London must be told later on.
CHAPTER XIII.

MANCHESTER AND THE ADJACENT TOWNS UNTIL 1843.

MANCHESTER was made an independent circuit in 1821 by the same Quarterly Meeting which made Burland a branch. Because of its derivation from Tunstall, the original circuit, it was placed fourth in order amongst the sixteen circuits which at that time constituted the entire Connexion.

Looking merely at the order of circuit formation, Manchester would rightly claim to come under notice before Burland, which was not made a circuit until 1823; but, having special regard to the geographical direction and spread of Primitive Methodism, the right is reversed. We have seen that north-west Cheshire was being inundated by the revival movement twelve months before its wave had reached the city on the Mersey. The extension of Tunstall Circuit to Manchester was one result of that great revival which may be said to have begun by John Wedgwood's mission to Staffordshire in 1819. We propose, therefore, in this chapter, to present the facts, so far as they can be ascertained, relative to the introduction of Primitive Methodism into Manchester, and to show what position the denomination had attained in that city and the neighbouring towns to which its labours had extended, by the year 1842.

Hitherto, it seems to have been thought almost hopeless to recover the names of those who had the honour of being the very first pioneers of the Connexion in Manchester. We would fain hope, however, that, even with the scanty data available, the nameless ones may yet be identified. There is a long-standing tradition to the effect that Primitive Methodism was first carried to Manchester by "a local preacher from Macclesfield; that he had a wooden leg; that he walked from Macclesfield on the Sunday morning to Manchester; that he preached at the New Cross after dinner; and that he walked home after preaching in the evening, thus performing a journey of thirty-six miles on foot!"* Now tradition is often very tenacious in its hold of essential fact, especially when the fact is such as to make a strong appeal to the imagination; and the mental picture of the unknown missionary with his artificial limb, stamping his way to Manchester and back, has stamped itself on the imaginations of men. Who else should the hero of our tradition be than "Eleazar Hathorn of the wooden leg"—the convert of Lorenzo Dow, active participant in the first Mow Cop Camp Meeting, the fellow-labourer of John Benton in the East Staffordshire Mission of 1814, and the instrument in the awakening of John Ride? We had reached the conclusion that the man we were in search of was no other than Eleazar Hathorn, when we found unexpected and pleasing confirmation of such conclusion in an obscure footnote of Herod's "Sketches," in the words: "This said Eleazar was the first Primitive that

* The Introduction and Spread of Primitive Methodism in Lancashire, in "Anecdotes and Facts of Primitive Methodism." By Rev. Samuel Smith, p. 91. For other References to Eleazar Hathorn, see vol. i. pp. 68; 192.
entered Manchester."* We may therefore reasonably conclude that the identification holds; and although Manchester bulks largely in the eye of the Connexion, and is sure to bulk still more largely in the future, it has no need to look otherwise than complacently on the figure of the old soldier determinedly plodding his way to deliver his message at the New Cross. We can think of no more fitting precursor and prototype of that community which had, with slender and imperfect appliances, and against heavy odds, to win its way step by step to an assured and honourable position in Cottonopolis. The war-worn veteran was a herald quite as worthy as though he had rushed there on his own motor-car, or been able to speed to the big city with the swiftness of an Elijah forerunning the chariot of Ahab.

But if Eleazar Hathorn was the herald of the Connexion to Manchester, who was its apostle—its sent one? To whom, of official status, does Hugh Bourne allude in the explicit statement: "Manchester was visited and preaching established about March, 1821"?† This statement is not at variance with the tradition already referred to; rather do tradition and statement confirm each other. Eleazar Hathorn who, in keeping with his habits, had gone to Manchester to do a little independent missioning, in the time of Macclesfield’s fervour, would naturally report his doings, and probably urge upon the "heads of houses" (and we know that Hugh Bourne visited him) to follow up officially these visits of his. We light upon a clue as to the person selected to "open" Manchester, in an entry in Hugh Bourne’s Journal. Writing under date, January 18th, 1821, he tells how he came to Belper and saw Thomas Jackson, and then goes on to say: "We agreed for him to go to Manchester, to be there on Sunday, March 9th." Unfortunately, there is an evident error here as to the date; for March 9th was Wednesday, and not Sunday. Probably March 6th was the date intended. In order that T. Jackson might be at liberty to give this Sunday to Manchester, some re-arrangement of appointments was necessary; so H. B. was to get R. Bentley to preach at Rocester at that time, and H. B. was to preach at Rocester on the 20th of March. This arrangement was carried out so far as Hugh Bourne was concerned, and, doubtless, Thomas Jackson fulfilled the duty assigned to him, and on the 6th March, officially opened Manchester. Here is the "apostle" we are in search of.

Let us briefly recall the "form and pressure" of the time when we made our entry into Manchester. George the Third had but recently died, and in a few months (July 27th, 1821) the coronation of his graceless successor would be celebrated. One notable feature of the celebration was to be a procession, two-and-a-half miles long, from Peter’s Field to Ardwick Green, and the night was destined to close with a drunken orgie in Shude Market, qualified by a retributive disaster. Peterloo, with the rankling memories it had left, was only just behind. At New Cross, where our first missionaries so often took their stand, not many months before, cannon had been planted to sweep the streets and overawe the populace. Nor were those cannon placed there merely for dumb show. Manchester was like a caldron in which conflicting elements were seething. They were indeed sad times, as may be gathered from the fact that another Thomas Jackson,

* Herod’s "Biographical Sketches." Footnote, p. 461.
† Magazine for 1821, p. 77.
though a duly ordained Methodist minister whom the highest Connexional honours awaited, was at this time "forced by the magistrates even after the public services of the Sabbath-day (in Oldham Street) to walk the streets through the night, in company with others, for the purpose of reporting any suspicious movements that might appear."* With Peterloo in the near background, and the struggle against the Corn-laws and for the Charter in prospect, who will say that the former times were better than these, or question the statement that there was room in Manchester for any corrective and ameliorative influences Primitive Methodism could bring?

We are told that the first meetings of the newly formed cause in Manchester were held "in a loft over a stable in Chorlton-upon-Medlock, somewhere about Brook Street, also in a cottage in London Square, Bank Top." Very soon "a top room over an old factory up an entry in Ancoats," locally known as "the Long Room," was acquired; and on July 30th, 1820, Ann Brownword preached several times in this room and also at the New Cross. She speaks of crowded services in the room and of having had ten converts on two successive week evenings. At this time she reports that there are five classes and eighty members. On the 27th and 28th of August Hugh Bourne preached at New Cross and in the Long Room. He renewed the tickets to the society and arrangements were made for the first camp meeting, which from another source we learn was held on the Ashton Road, on September 17th. This camp meeting was conducted by James Bonsor, fresh from his experience at the Stafford Sessions, who had been brought from Darlaston Circuit in exchange for Ann Brownword. James Bonsor's labours were not confined to one locality, but pretty well distributed as the following entry shows:—

"Sunday, October 1st, 1820.—At eight preached in Cropper Street. At ten Bro. Smith preached at Salford Cross, and I gave an exhortation. A many seemed affected. At half-past eleven I preached at another place in Salford. At half-past one, Bro. Smith and I preached in Castle Field. Many people and a good time; sinners cried much for mercy. At half-past three I preached in another part of Manchester to a large congregation. Near five, I preached at Salford Cross, and at half-past six, at Manchester New Cross."—*Magazine,* 1821, p. 20.

Thus on one Sabbath he took part in seven services in different parts of Manchester. No wonder that from the committee meeting, held on October 6th, he reports that things are in a very flourishing state; that there are nearly one hundred members, and that they had agreed to take another room in a different part of the town. The room here alluded to would probably be the same as that more explicitly referred to by Hugh Bourne (*Magazine* 1821) in the report of the Michaelmas Quarterly Meeting of the Tunstall Circuit, wherein he says of Manchester: "They have a very large room in New Islington, and they have had the courage to take another large room in Chancery Lane. This example may be followed with advantage in most towns."

As early as James Bonsor's short mission in Manchester two names that should not be forgotten came before us for the first time. Samuel Waller, a cotton-spinner in

* "Recollections of My own Life and Times." By Thomas Jackson, p. 173. Mrs. Linnaeus Banks deals with this precise time in "The Manchester Man." The work contains much local colour and word-sketches of contemporary persons and localities.
partnership with his brothers, was at this time a Methodist class-leader. He was brought in contact with the Primitives and felt drawn to them by reason of their methods of doing good and their plainness in dress. With the concurrence of his brother, who was also a Methodist class leader, he joined the infant society. His first public effort was made on September 25th, 1820, at what was called a watch-night service in the Long Room, when he and Walton Carter each gave an exhortation, and James Bonsor "made a statement as to the work of God." Before twelve months were over, he suffered imprisonment for preaching in the open air, and Samuel Waller shares with Thomas Russell the honour of having endured the longest and most trying imprisonment recorded in our Connexional annals. A subordinate constable, a renegade Methodist, made himself obnoxiously busy in interfering with the service held on the evening of June 17th, 1821. There was no disturbance, and no clear case of obstruction, yet Mr. Waller was committed to take his trial at the Salford Sessions, charged with: "Having in the King's highway, in Ashton-under-Lyne, unlawfully and injudiciously caused and procured a great number of persons to assemble together, obstructing the said highway, to the great damage and common nuisance of the liege subjects of our Lord the King; and with making a noise, riot, tumult, and disturbance; and with making such riot by shouting and singing; and wholly choking up and obstructing the street and highway." Mr. Waller was sentenced to be imprisoned for three months in Manchester New Bailey, and, on the expiry of his term, he was re-committed for six days in order to make up the three calendar months. So far as the North of England is concerned, we shall meet with no other incident like this in the history of Primitive Methodism. Yet no inference can be drawn from the incident to the discredit of the people of Lancashire. On the contrary, their sense of justice was outraged by the treatment meted out to Mr. Waller, and there was no lack of sympathy with the prisoner, who was seriously ill during his confinement. The prison doctor showed himself either indifferent or incompetent; but by the good
offices of friends the best medical aid was procured, and the governor of the jail acted in a most humane manner. It is clear that political animus had more to do with this travesty of justice than ought else. The magistrates had lost their heads. They saw signs of possible riot and disturbance everywhere. The bias of the chairman of the Quarter Sessions was revealed by the observations he dropped during the course of the trial; and, if what is alleged be true, that the chairman was the vicar of Rochdale, who had been "military leader" on the black day of Peterloo, much is explained.

"The day after Mr. Waller's discharge, Wednesday, October 17th, 1821, a meeting was held at Chancery Lane, when it appeared this imprisonment had been the means of stirring up many to hear the Word, and on the whole that it had served greatly to advance the Redeemer's kingdom."* No doubt at this significant service there would be sung some of those special hymns "On the Releasement of S. Waller from Prison," we find in the Magazine for 1822. We do not catch, in these hymns, the triumphant note that strikes us in those called forth by John Wedgwood's Grantham experiences. In these the pervading sentiment is one of chastened thankfulness, as is seen in the chorus of one of them:

"Releas'd from bondage, grief, and pain,
We meet with this our friend again."

One of the best of these hymns was written by Walton Carter, already referred to. He too encountered the "backsliding Methodist constable," who pulled him down at Ashton Cross and tore his clothes. But though Carter was brought before the magistrates at Oldham, he and his companion were dismissed. Of Walton Carter's antecedents we can glean nothing; but he became a noted missioner in Manchester and its neighbourhood, and was our Connexional pioneer in several towns which are now the head of important stations. In fact he seems to have fulfilled the duties of a travelling preacher in the Manchester Circuit during the years 1821-2, although his name does not appear on the official stations; so that, although Manchester Circuit in 1821 has only John Verity down for it, with the words "for six months" appended, we need not suppose that Manchester was left without a preacher for half the year. Walton Carter was on the ground. His well-written Journals appear side by side with those of Verity in the Magazine, and when Verity has left, Carter is still actively engaged in the circuit, and as late as May, 1822, sends an account to the Magazine of the first Oldham camp meeting. In 1823 his name appears on the stations for the first and last time, in connection with Halifax. He retired from the ministry, and subsequently became the proprietor of a day and boarding school at Bucklow Hill, near Knutsford. The breach with the past was not complete. He still kept in touch with Manchester; for amongst his boarders were several youths belonging to Primitive Methodist families resident in the city in which he had once rendered good service. There is reason to fear, however, that his last days were not the brightest and the best.

Before the close of 1821, there were, as the books show, in Manchester alone

* There is a full account of the trial of S. Waller in the Magazine for 1822, pp. 259, 281. See also S. Smith's "The Introduction," etc., already cited, p. 98.
two hundred and eleven members. The progress of the Society in other respects than in numbers was marked by the building, in 1823-4, of Jersey Street Chapel, which, right through and beyond the first period of our history, was the well-known centre of our work in Manchester. The superintendent at the time was Thomas Sugden, whose name disappears from the stations in 1824. He was not, however, lost to the Connexion, but settled down in Manchester, and made himself useful in various ways. "Thomas Sugden, confectioner, Manchester," was one of the original signatories of the Deed Poll, who took their seats, for the first time, at the Conference of 1832. Ralph Waller (the brother of Samuel Waller), cotton-spinner, Mellor, near Manchester, was another of these original members; and when, by the death of George Taylor, the first vacancy occurred on the Deed Poll, the Bradford Conference elected Stephen Longdin, of Manchester, to the office. Stephen Longdin's election to this office, together with the fact that his portrait is to be found amongst those of the early Presidents of Conference, along with the very few laymen, such as George Hanford, Joseph Bailey, and Thomas Bateman, who are credited with having attained to that unusual distinction, proves that at the time of his election to the chair in 1849, he was widely known as a Connexional man. Born in 1795, he survived until 1878; and, as early as 1824, he had become a useful class leader, and was giving proof of the possession of unusual preaching ability and of special aptitude for the administration of affairs, all which made him, through a long course of years, a leading figure in Manchester Primitive Methodism.

The opening services of Jersey Street Chapel, in which Hugh Bourne took part, were held in the early part of 1824. The building was spacious; the gallery alone having accommodation for five hundred people. "Unfortunately the attendance at the subsequent services was not so large as had been anticipated. The interest on the heavy mortgage and the costs of maintenance pressed seriously on the limited resources of the Society, and in the end it was felt that the liabilities were too heavy to be carried. The trustees, therefore, determined on an alteration of the building. A floor was inserted across the well of the gallery, and in the lower portion of the building dwelling-houses were constructed, the rents of which materially helped the trustees to carry the financial burden. After these alterations the public religious services were well attended, and several persons who attained distinction in public life became regular hearers. Alderman Walton Smith, Mr. Joseph Nall, Councillor
THE PERIOD OF CIRCUIT PREDOMINANCE AND ENTERPRISE.

PRESIDENTS OF CONFERENCE UNTIL 1849, AS FAR AS RECORDED.
Gregory Alcock, and the Waller family were for a long period among the stated worshippers."

The structural, brick-and-mortar history of Jersey Street, of Canaan Street, of West Street, or any other of the historic chapels of Primitive Methodism is the least important part of its history to be recalled. The main thing to be recognised is the body of rich and constantly multiplying associations that for so many people gathered round the building; the large place it filled in the better part of the lives of so many; the memories and the talks by the fireside of the men who ministered or were ministered unto within its walls; the historic meetings, the notable texts and sermons, the remarkable conversions, the rousing prayer-meetings, the inspiring hymns, the love-feast experiences; the institutional Saturday-night band-meeting, for which even the country people would steal an hour from their marketing; even the traits and oddities and outstanding features in the characters of the habitual frequenters of the sanctuary, remembered all the more vividly when they are gone—all this constitutes the true history of the plain old building now no more, and explains the hold it got on the hearts and imaginations of men, and yet all this has to be conceived rather than described in relation to Jersey Street, which was the ganglion—the nerve-centre of our denominational life in Manchester for so long a term of years.

Two Conferences were held in Jersey Street—that of 1827, of which we know a little, and that of 1840, of which we know next to nothing. At the former there were five o'clock morning preachings, a procession through a large part of the town to the camp-ground near the workhouse, and in the evening there was held what may be called an In Memoriam service for James Steele, who had died but a few days before the opening of Conference. W. Clowes would have taken a leading part in this service but for the fact that he was then, and had been for some time, in an indifferent state of health. As it was, it fell to the lot of Hugh Bourne and Thomas King to speak of the life and death of this honoured servant of God. In his Journal, however, Clowes tells how he had visited James Steele—whom he designates "one of the founders of the Primitive Methodist Connexion"—only a few minutes before he expired. He records how, though the sands of the hour-glass were fast running out, the good man "entered freely into conversation respecting the work of the Lord," and how, when asked if his faith stood firm, he replied in the words of the Psalmist, "I will not forsake thee when thy faith faileth."

An administrative change of some importance was effected at this Conference. A new district was formed out of some of the frontier stations of Tunstall, Nottingham, and Hull Districts, and of this new district Manchester was made the head. Towards the formation Nottingham gave New Mills, and a year after Bradwell; Hull gave Preston, Blackburn, Clitheroe, and Keighley; while the mother-district contributed Preston Brook, Liverpool, and Chester, together with Manchester and its daughter-circuits Oldham and Bolton, and Bolton's own child—the Isle of Man. Thus it will be seen at a glance, that Manchester District was made rather than grew. A new district was created; as it were by a stroke of the pen, for administrative purposes,
out of circuits of diverse origin. It is not, therefore, with the beginnings of the Conference-created Manchester District of 1827 this chapter has to do, but rather with the Manchester district of to-day, made up, as for the most part it is, of circuits of which Manchester was the nucleus. If the time should come, as possibly it may, when the circuits which grew out of Hull's North Lancashire mission shall become a separate district with, say, Preston as its titular head, then there will be something like a reversion, and district arrangements will in a striking way conform to the facts of our history, which show how the ground now covered by the present Manchester and Liverpool Districts was first missioned by a triple agency.

"THE REMISSIONING SYSTEM" AND "THE PIous PRAYING LABOURERS" OF MANCHESTER.

The four years following 1832 were for Manchester, as they were for the Connexion generally, a period of remarkable numerical increase. During this period the membership of the Manchester Circuit rose from five hundred and eighty-four in 1832, to one thousand three hundred and twenty in 1836, and the circuit more than doubled the number of its travelling preachers. Doubtless, the same general causes that wrought for improvement in other parts of the Connexion produced their salutary effects here also. The Church was all the healthier and stronger for service because of the time of trial and sifting through which it had passed. Over and above these widely distributed causes, however, there was a special cause largely accountable for local success, to which Hugh Bourne thus alludes in his Journal:

"July 30th, 1832.— Came to Manchester, ten miles by the railway. Saw brothers Butcher, Brame, and Gibson [the travelling preachers], and was thankful to hear of there being an excellent revival at Rochdale, in this Circuit; and that the converting work is on the move in the Jersey Street Chapel in Manchester. I was also thankful to hear that the pious praying labourers in Manchester have entered on the open-air system with vigour and effect. I do trust that this system will find its way into all the circuits."

Who were these pious, praying labourers, and what was the open-air system they practised? First in order amongst the names "to be had in respectful remembrance" must be placed the venerable Thomas Hewitt, in whose house in London Square, Banktop, the first class met in Manchester, and from whose doorstep the first missionary preached. He remained firm to the end of life, and zealous in his attachment to the Connexion; and his eldest son, who likewise bore the name of Thomas, was for some time the efficient superintendent of the Sunday School.

Of Jonathan Heywood, whom S. Smith describes as "a mighty man in prayer," we have a short pen-and-ink sketch by Mr. W. E. Parker:—"Jonathan Heywood, an old man, full of song, a joyful Christian, exerted a strong religious influence during many years. He was somewhat diminutive of stature, but showed much quickness, alertness, even nimbleness. He was always ready for the spiritual fray. When speaking or singing he seemed as though set on springs, and with a thin, shrill voice, but with intense fervour and power he sought to help men by holy song into the kingdom of
God. For many years before his death he was a complete invalid, and a great sufferer, but in all his affliction he witnessed a good confession, and died in triumph."

Another member of the goodly fellowship of workers was Thomas Holden, who, Mr. Parker tells us, at an early date in the history of the society, came from Todd Hall, near Haslingden, and was, for thirty years, a most successful class leader. "His was a constant and conspicuous figure in the congregation of Jersey Street. His fine, manly form and his sweet but powerful voice made him a desirable leader in open-air work. A prayer meeting without his presence or without his prayer was not to be thought of." When James Holden, his eldest son, at last yielded to the convictions he had long resisted, that son's demonstrations of joy at his new-found liberty were like those of the healed paralytic, or like theirs whose captivity was turned. Others rejoiced with him in song and shouts of triumph. The scene was one not easily to be forgotten, and was often recalled. James Holden retained his active connection with Jersey Street until his lamented death in 1896.

As recently as 1901, there passed away one whose life more than covered the entire history of Manchester Primitive Methodism. As a girl, Mrs. Hannah Mc Kee received her first class-ticket in 1824, and was thus the contemporary of them who formed the remissioning bands, and she may well have assisted in their efforts. Not on this ground alone does she merit reference here, but because, for sixty years, she was a teacher in Jersey Street and New Islington Sunday Schools; a contributor on a somewhat large scale to the funds of the Church; at the time of her death the oldest Primitive Methodist in Manchester; and because she has left descendants, even to the fourth generation, who are closely associated with our denomination.

Jonathan Ireland was undoubtedly the leader of the band. It was from him Hugh Bourne learned the facts about the "remissioning system," which he gave at length in the Magazine for 1835; and though no names are mentioned (by J. L.'s own request, it is said) it is clear that Hugh Bourne regarded him as the "founder" and leading spirit of the movement. Jonathan Ireland was by aptitude and preference "a determined street-preacher," as he has been well called. He began his religious life in association with the Church of England, in "gay Preston." But even then his native bent showed itself. He was restive under restrictions. The contemplative life had no charms for him; nor could the observance of routine, however decorous, satisfy. He must do something, and something out of the common. So he rang the church bells, and planted shrubs in the churchyard. He even took part in house prayer meetings, where each one read his prayer out of the book; and once, when he made a burst into free prayer, he chastised himself by self-reproaches for having given way to what was Methodistic and improper. But he broke free from his fetters, and became a Methodist and a successful class leader, and an active sick visitor. Then he
came to Manchester, and found his true vocation when he joined the Primitives. This was in November, 1823, when Jersey Street Chapel was a building.

When, in 1832, Manchester, like so many other towns and cities, was being ravaged by the cholera, Jonathan Ireland was moved to put forth special efforts to carry the gospel of salvation and consolation into the "streets and lanes of the city." He was nobly seconded by Jonathan Heywood, Thomas Hewitt, and others like-minded. Their method was, beginning at the house-door of one of the band, to go singing through the streets to a suitable stand in some populous quarter, and then halt, while a short, pointed exhortation was given. The like procedure was repeated again and again, until the time for morning or evening service had come, when they sang their way to the chapel. These remissioning efforts were continued all through that fateful summer with good results; but—and this is the noteworthy thing—they were not laid aside when the cholera had ceased its ravages. Each time the cholera has visited this country it has swollen our annual returns on the right side. An increase of 7120 stands to the credit of 1833; and the increase for 1850, following upon the fearful visitation of 1848-9, when more than five thousand persons perished, was still higher, amounting to 9205, a figure never reached before or since. But closer scrutiny would show that in some localities, the year of ingathering was followed by a year of wastage; that re-action followed revival; that many whom the cholera had frightened into the Church rather than driven to Christ, withdrew; and that even the Church itself, now that the scourge was overpast, too frequently relaxed its efforts to save men. But, as we have said, it was not so in Manchester; rather was remissioning carried on more energetically than before.

The planting of our Church in Salford grew out of the unremitting efforts of Jonathan Ireland and his co-workers. The first headquarters were in a room in Dale Street; then, in 1844, King Street Chapel was opened (afterwards Blackfriars Street, and now Camp Street, Broughton). One cannot read Jonathan Ireland's "Autobiography"* without being impressed with his tireless zeal and, no less, with his tact and resourcefulness. He was a true disciple of Hugh Bourne in never failing to notice the children. Even the slatterns and viragos of a "mean street" were mollified, as they saw the preacher shaking hands with the bairns at the close of a service. When he went into an Irish quarter, he knew better than to lead off with a denunciation of the Pope and all his works. He sought rather to begin by finding some common ground of agreement with his hearers. One quotation we will give, to show his methods and the kind of work that was being done during those earlier years:

"One Sunday morning at nine o'clock (it was the Sunday following the races, and so drunkenness was peculiarly prevalent), I went into Wood Street, which runs out of Brown Street, to mission, several friends being with me. When I got up to preach I looked at the people, and cried out: 'You are a sorry set, without comfort and character; no credit, for nobody will trust you a farthing. Now, I'm here as your friend; and I'll tell you a way in which you may, in twelve

months have a good suit of clothes, goods in your home, money in your pockets, and comfort in your families.' This got hold of their minds; and I held them fast while I preached Jesus unto them. I had to preach that same morning in the room [in Salford]. When I had finished in the street I invited all to go with me just as they were. Many yielded, so I gave them a second edition. But while I had been engaged outside a man came up, and calling one of the members to him, he said: 'I'm glad I've met with you this morning. Your singing attracted me; for I was on the way to the old river, where, in some secret spot, I might end my miserable life by cutting my throat. Take this,' said the man, handing forward a razor, 'for if you have it I shall have one temptation less to grapple with.'”—(p. 41).

But even before the establishment of the Salford mission there already existed another mission-centre in Oxford Road. First a small cottage, then a small cellar, then a room over some stables, next a larger room once used by the Tent-Methodists. Such was the order. On the opening of this room, while Thomas Sugden was leading the love-feast, the floor fell in, and the story goes that the mishap occurred while all were lustily singing, "We are going home to glory." One man was injured, and many were frightened. The next remove was to a building in Ormond Street, vacated by the Wesleyans for their new chapel in Oxford Road. Ultimately this was exchanged for Rosamond Street Chapel, which for many years stood as the head of Manchester Second Circuit, now Moss Lane.

Yet a third mission was begun in these formative years, in a room over three houses in Ashton Street, London Road—now swept away by the London Road Station. The friend who had leased the room to the society at a low rental, at his death left the sum of £130 for a new chapel, "if a new chapel should ever be required by the Primitive Methodist denomination in Manchester"!—another proof of the doubt as to the perpetuity of the Connexion that crossed and troubled the minds at that time, even of those who were friendly disposed. Mr. Chadwick's legacy came in useful as a kind of nest-egg. More chapels were built in Manchester, as our full-page illustration shows, and there are more to follow. Ogden Street Chapel, opened in 1850, superseded Ashton Street room, and from this has grown Manchester Fourth and Ninth Stations, with the exception of Droylesden, taken from Stockport Second and attached to Manchester Ninth, on its formation in 1893. Good Mr. Chadwick's doubts as to whether the Primitives would ever build a new chapel in Manchester, have had their answer in Higher Ardwick Church, opened in 1878; and there was a natural sequence between the £15,000 expended on that stately pile and the £130 he somewhat timorously put down in his last will and testament. Thus, while a survey of the denomination's advance in Manchester during recent years, especially in its relation to ministerial education and training, will naturally challenge our attention later on, it was right that we should, even at this stage, at least indicate the thread of continuity running through our Connexional life in this great city. What we now see is largely the outcome of the missionary efforts carried on so vigorously during the first period.

We began with Manchester at the New Cross, and, so far as Manchester itself is concerned, we may fittingly end there. "The New Cross (open air)" stands as the second place on a plan for 1832, and a Sunday afternoon service was held where the old
THE PERIOD OF CIRCUIT PREDOMINANCE AND ENTERPRISE.

MANCHESTER

UPPER MOSS LANE

HIGHER ARDWICK

NEW ISLINGTON

KING ST.

HALL ST.

G WESTERN ST.

CHORLEY R.

HIGHER OPENSHAW

CHAPELS
pillar once stood, right on until the days of the Chartist agitation, when the authorities put their veto on *al fresco* meetings—political or religious—at that favourite stand. The magisterial mind of that epoch could not make subtle distinctions.

It was by lingering at one of these New Cross services when returning from Oldham Street Wesleyan Chapel, which they attended, that Nathaniel Naylor and his wife fell in love with the Primitives. They thought it right to join the denomination, and became active workers and liberal supporters of the Jersey Street and New Islington societies. The youngest daughter of the house became the wife of Thomas Hindley, so widely known and respected as a minister in the Manchester District. There are other names of early workers, that ought to be more than names to us, but space forbids little more than the mention of them. There were: John Turner, for many years the courteous, prudent, efficient choir-master; Thomas Sharrock, an early Sunday School superintendent, much beloved, though he had an awe-inspiring presence and the reputation of knowing more than most; W. Williams, Thomas Sugden's successor in the confectionery business, circuit secretary and afterwards steward, a thoughtful, acceptable preacher, and a good District and Connexional man, at whose house, in Ancoat's Lane, ministers and friends from a distance would drop in for rest and talk; Samuel Johnson, a local preacher for many years, a man of wide reading and large outlook, whose discourses were listened to with interest and profit by many Lancashire congregations; Barnabas Parker, Charles Malpas also, and Job Williams, and Rachel Whitehead, and John Crompton, and Charles Taylor, who, in their several spheres, lived the Christian life and served the interests of Jersey Street Society.

This brief chronicle of departed worth may pleasantly end with a reference to good but eccentric David Bailey, of whose devotion and oddities tradition still loves to speak. He would "shut to the door" even of his shop while he retired for prayer, and so immersed himself in evangelistic work that his brethren feared his business would suffer; he was a dealer in earthenware near Shudehill Market, and his superin-
tendent was appointed to admonish him. "David," said Rev. W. Antliff, "are you never afraid you'll break?" "Break?" said "Pot" David; "not till the fiftieth Psalm breaks at the fifteenth verse, 'Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.'" The answer was distinctly good, though it is to be feared David put a strain upon the promise it was never intended to bear.

**Sale; Walkden Moor; Middleton.**

Though, for the time being, we have done with Manchester city, we have not quite done with Manchester Circuit. At first, as has already been intimated Manchester Circuit was almost the first rough draft of the Manchester District of to-day. Important circuits were formed from it at an early date; but at present our concern is not with these, but rather with one or two places that were missioned at an early date and continued to be an integral part of the Manchester Circuit all through the first period, though now, in nearly every case, they have become heads of circuits.

Sale, we are told, was missioned as early as 1824-5. At that time the people around were "uncommonly rough and ignorant," and being chiefly employed in market-gardening, domestic
work was left over until the Sunday. The mission to Sale was opened by a notable camp-meeting held in a hired field. Early in the day the converting work broke out, and the number of mourners was so great that a corner of the field was set apart for the holding of a continuous prayer meeting while the camp-meeting was still going on. This corner, appropriately named "the hospital," was placed under the superintendence of Thomas Buttler, a man of experience, who single-handed did much successful pioneer work in the country-side. "This day's labour led to results which were felt all over the neighbourhood. A visible reformation of manners followed." A Primitive Methodist society was formed, and "the Wesleyans were quickened and became prosperous."* A school chapel was erected in 1839, and the present church and school in 1872. The greater part of the manual and team labour involved in the taking down of the old building was undertaken by those most deeply interested in the work, amongst whom may be named, the Bellis family, Messrs. James Oakes, Samuel Derbyshire, and John E. Wright. The last named, from the time of his joining the Church, to his death in 1890, conscientiously fulfilled the duties of his various offices.

Sale will always be associated with the memory of James Garner, one of the most massive and outstanding figures of the Manchester District. By virtue of a rare combination of qualities he was equally eminent in the pulpit, the committee room, the floor of Conference, the presidential chair, and the author's desk. Thirty-four out of the thirty-six years of his circuit ministry were spent in the old Manchester District, and about one half of these in the cities of Liverpool and Manchester. He began his ministry in 1830 as the junior colleague of his brother, John Garner, in the Oldham Circuit, and it was at the Oldham Conference of 1871 he was super-annuated. He spent the remainder of his days at Sale, where his son-in-law, Mr. James Greenhalgh, accountant and Connexional auditor, resided. He was superintendent at the time the first chapel at Sale was built, and he took a deep and practical interest in the building of the present church. Before the end came, December, 1895, in a momentary lapse, he was heard to say: "Well, Mr. Bourne, I am glad to see you. How is the Connexion doing?" Consciousness had harked back to the early times, and the master-passion of life was strong in death.

On the Manchester Circuit plan for 1832 we find, amongst other places, Mosley Common, Walkden Moor, Middleton, Unsworth, and Stretford; and, now and again, * See "Jonathan Ireland, the Street Preacher," for the quotations given in this paragraph.
an incident can be recovered having its value as illustrating the missionary activity going on in these localities. At Walkden Moor, one of the first trophies of grace to be won was H. Gibson. Ill at ease under what seems to have been incipient conviction of sin, he had enlisted into the First Life Guards, thinking that surely so complete a change as this would give him peace. But he was no happier at Whitehall than at Walkden Moor, and he was glad when, his father having purchased his discharge, he was free to return to his home. His old acquaintances welcomed him effusively, and he was soon enticed to match his bird at a cock-fight for ten shillings a side. His bird lay dying on the floor and, as he knelt before it, it came to him in a flash how he had knelt in the stable at Whitehall and promised God that if He would deliver him from soldiering he would lead a better life. He had broken his vow; but perhaps it was not yet too late. He would keep it now. He rose, threw down his money, and fled from the pandemonium. His pals pursued him with entreaties to return, but, like Pilgrim escaping from the City of Destruction, he hastened away, crying, "No, no! Farewell, cock-pit!" Not even yet did Gibson find peace. Like John Oxtoby, he was a Churchman of a kind, and Mr. Cry, the curate, prescribed for him: "Attend the church and sacraments regularly"; for is not that the whole duty of man? Then, hearing that J. Verity was to preach at "old Charlotte's" at Waterbeach, Gibson went to the service, but instead of Verity he heard a labouring man "with blue hands," who showed him his own heart, and what it was that really ailed him. H. Gibson was converted, held on his way, and became a local preacher.

At Middleton (since 1872 the head of a circuit), the first chapel-keeper was John Taylor, who had been a notorious pigeon-flyer and "hush-seller," i.e., keeper of an unlicensed beer-house. He was reached by some straight talk at an open-air service, at the outskirts of which the pigeon-flyers were standing discussing to-morrow's match. Jonathan Ireland, who delighted in facts, was telling the story of this man's conversion, at a missionary meeting in Jersey Street some time after, when Taylor rose up before him in the congregation and shouted, "I'm the man."

The way into Gatley (now in the Stockport Circuit), we are told, was opened by Thomas Buttler, whom we have seen superintending the "hospital" at the first camp-meeting at Sale. Buttler went about the country prospecting, seeking the most likely places in which to open a mission. As he rode his ass from village to village, he claimed exemption from paying toll on the ground that he was doing the Lord's work. If, on the Sabbath, he heard the loom at work in a house as he went along, he would enter and rebuke the Sabbath-breaker. Buttler found his way to Gatley; and the result of our labours there was a great reformation, which led the farmers to say: "These people deserve encouragement, for since they came our apples are not stolen, nor our hedges broken down."

**OUR EARLY HYMNS: THEIR POPULARITY WITH THE MASSES.**

Such missionary anecdotes as these show the kind of work that went on in the early days, and the kind of work that, above all, needed to be done; and here in Lancashire we are struck, as we were in writing of the Leicestershire revival, with the prodigious
numbers the missionaries got to hear them, and with the almost entire absence of persecution. At Bolton—at the stocks and in the wood-yard where the first services were held,—at Ashton Town Cross, at Astley, at Oldham,—in fact wherever the missionaries went, they had no difficulty in gathering congregations. In the estimates of numbers given the word thousands occurs much more frequently than hundreds. "Preach! preach!" was the cry raised at Ashton Cross when, for a moment, the backslidden constable had silenced Walton Carter. The people were hungry for the Word and would not be denied, so that Carter had to gather himself together and preach, despite his torn coat and the constable's threats. Here too, as elsewhere, facts go to show that the hymns the missionaries sang counted for much in making

their street-missioning and open-air services acceptable and effective. Our fathers knew the power there is in a taking melody, and were not slow to avail themselves of this power. Like William Jefferson, they did not see why the devil should have all the best tunes, and so did their best to carry off the spoil. "The Lion of Judah" was only one of many tunes thus requisitioned. One evening, when the eccentric Henry Higgenson was on his way to a tea meeting at Walsall, he heard a lad singing a song which attracted him. "Here, my lad, sing that again, and I'll give thee a penny." The lad did as he was told, more than once. "Here you are, my man," said Higgenson, throwing him the penny; "I've got the tune, and the devil may take the
words." The policy, if it were policy and not rather a sure instinct, was justified by its results, and perhaps nowhere more than in Lancashire, as Jonathan Ireland clearly admits. The admission may well be given in his own words, as the remarks show considerable acuteness, and contain a kindly reference to Richard Jukes, who, although he was a prolific and popular hymn-writer of his day, is in some danger of being forgotten:—

"Before the Primitive Methodists came to this city [Manchester], and for some time after, it was very common to hear lewd or ribald songs sung in the streets, especially on the Lord's day. But our movements drove them away by putting something better in their place. We used to pick up the most effective tunes we heard, and put them to our hymns; and at our camp-meetings people, chiefly young ones, used to run up to hear us, thinking we were singing a favourite song. But they were disappointed therein; nevertheless, they were arrested and often charmed by the hymn, which at times went with power to their hearts. And so the words of the hymn put aside the words of the song. It will show the utility of singing lively hymns in the streets; yea, more particularly, it will show the use to society in general of our hymn-singing in the streets, if I here relate a fact which was told me by a friend on whose veracity and accuracy I can place reliance. He said: 'I was one day in a hair-dresser's shop in a country village, when a man came in to be shaved, having a handful of printed hymns, which he had been singing and selling in the streets. I entered into conversation with him, in course of which he said: 'Your Jukes has been a good friend to us street-singers; I have sung lots of his hymns, and made many a bright shilling thereby. People generally would rather hear a nice hymn sung, than a foolish song,—and his hymns are full of sympathy and life. Depend on it, the singing of hymns in the streets has done a deal of good; for children stand to listen to us, and they get hold of a few lines, or of the chorus; and with the tune, or as much of it as they can think of, they run home, and for days they sing it in their homes, and their mothers and sisters get hold of it, and in this way, I maintain, our hymn-singing is of more use than many folks think. I shall always think well of Jukes," concluded the man."

What Primitive Methodist will not heartily concur in this conclusion of the philosophic street singer? "Jukes' hymns have been sung from one end of the Connexion to the other, by tramps in the street and Christians in the chapels; and the late Dr. Massie says, the hymn entitled, 'What's the News,' &c., has been sung and repeated in the great Revival in Ireland."* George Herbert told us long since that:—

"A verse may find him who a sermon flies."

And popular, sacred songs are the most volatile and penetrating agents of religious propagandism, the more powerful because their power is unsuspected. They float on the breeze like the thistle-down, and like it they carry their seed with them. It is a simple yet sufficient illustration of this far-reaching, penetrative power of the verse which John Coulson relates. When, in 1819, on his way to Hull to seek out W. Clowes and the Primitives, he called at a house of entertainment at Mansfield. A sweep was

sitting turning over the leaves of a dingy pamphlet, to whom presently came the hostess, with the words: “Robert, you must sing that hymn with the hallelujahs at the end of it; for the children will not go to school until they hear it.” The sweep stood up and sang:—

“Come, oh come, thou vilest sinner;
Christ is ready to receive;
Weak and wounded, sick and sore,
Jesus’ balm can cure more.
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah to the Lamb!”

We are not sure whether a still higher claim cannot be put forth for the open-air hymn-singing of Primitive Methodism from sixty to eighty years ago. Not even yet can England be called with the same truth as can other countries that might be named—the land of song. One of the impressions the foreigner gets of London is that, despite the constant roar of traffic, the people are strangely silent. But, if we are to believe Thomas Mozley,* the England of 1820 was distinguished neither for its songfulness nor for its silence, but for a vocal expression which had no gladness in it, and which he himself thus describes:—

“I will content myself with one point of contrast between England as it now is and England as it was two, indeed I might now say three generations ago. It has forced itself upon me so often that I should hardly do justice to myself if I did not declare it. In my younger days there was heard everywhere and at all hours the voice of lamentation and passion, not always from the young, not always even from the very poor. In towns and villages, in streets and in houses, in nurseries and in schools, and even on the road, there were heard continually screams, prolonged wailings, indignant remonstrances, and angry altercations, as if the earth were full of violence, and the hearts of fathers were set against their children, and the hearts of children against their fathers. No doubt it was so in the time of the poet who filled the vestibule of hell with squalling children. But, as I have said, these were not all children who brawled or lamented in the open air and in the mid-day, filling the air with their grievances, and resolved, as they could not be happy themselves, none else should be. Such a picture would be pronounced at once utterly inapplicable to the times we now live in, but I leave it to almost any octogenarian to say whether it be not a true account of England as it was sixty or seventy years ago.”

The picture drawn by Mozley of England as he knew it in 1820, dark though it be, is not, we are convinced, overcharged with sepia. “Merry England” was a designation sadly inappropriate to our land before the repeal of the Corn Laws. What the Psalmist so much deprecated had befallen us; there was “complaining in our streets.” Hence the open-air songs of the new evangel breathing hope and promising deliverance

* See the chapter on “England in 1820 and England in 1884,” in Vol. II. of his “Reminiscences, chiefly of Villages, Towns, and Schools.” Thomas Mozley was a brother of Canon Mozley, the theologian, a relative of Cardinal Newman, and a prolific leader-writer on the Times. He died in 1883, in the eighty-third year of his age, so that, in giving his impressions of the England of 1820 (the year Primitive Methodism was introduced into Manchester), he was writing of what was well within his own knowledge.
came as a startling novelty, and no wonder men flocked to listen. And if now Mozley's picture held up to the present would appear the veriest caricature, we should rejoice that our Church has greatly helped to destroy its verisimilitude. As we pass along the streets of the working-class quarter of our towns and cities we hear the Salvation Army band, and from many a lighted window we catch the sound of familiar hymn. Sacred song, like bread, is cheap and common now, we say. It was not always so, and we have done something to give sacred song its vogue.

The Manchester Group of Circuits. "We are seven."

By 1843 the Manchester Circuit of 1821 had come to be represented by a group of direct and indirect descendants—seven in number. As the result of a process of division and sub-division plus extension, the original circuit had developed into the Bolton, Oldham, Isle of Man, Stockport, Bury, Rochdale, and Stalybridge Circuits. Let us rapidly follow the main lines of this development.

Bolton was granted circuit independence, June, 1822. J. Verity was here on June 24th, 1821, when he writes of preaching to three thousand people, joining twenty to the society, and notes that there is "an appearance of a great work." Just a month after he is at a camp-meeting, and leads a love-feast in the Cloth Hall. On August 19th he preaches three times in the open air, having, it was said, a congregation of five thousand people. Two days after, he is collecting for the fitting up of a large room, and meets with "amazing success." He is greatly encouraged by a gift of sixteen shillings from a number of mechanics. They were just about to have a "footing" carouse, when an "influence which could only proceed from Almighty God caused them to deny themselves," and devote the money to the "poor Ranters," as they called them. Verity closes his labours at Bolton by forming a Leaders' Meeting, and at this time, August 24th, reports that there are nine classes and one hundred and sixty members. Progress is marked by the opening, on September 3rd, of the large room by Walton. Carter as preacher, and though it was a week evening, he had a congregation of eleven or twelve hundred people. It is noteworthy that when Bolton was made a circuit no other place was associated with it, hence, as two preachers are on the station in 1823, and five hundred members are reported, it is clear that other adjacent places must soon have been missioned.

In this same year, 1822, a brick chapel was erected in Newport Street, and a congregation continued to worship there until 1865, when a chapel was purchased from the Baptists in Moor Lane, now the head of Bolton Second. The present Higher Bridge Street Chapel, the head of Bolton First Circuit, was erected in 1870 at a cost of £6,588. It occupies the site acquired as far back as 1836 by Samuel Tillotson, on which a plain, substantial building was erected, flanked on either side by a house (in one of which the preacher resided), and having
a burial-ground in front. In 1868 a school was built in the rear of the chapel, and the years brought other changes to the property, the most serious being decrepitude—a tendency to fall. The insecurity of the structure led to the erection, during the vigorous superintendency of the Rev. James Travis, of the chapel shown in our picture. In 1893 the school premises were entirely re-modelled.

All the facts go to show that from the first, Bolton, like other Lancashire towns, took kindly to Primitive Methodism. "Took kindly" is scarcely the word. It would be nearer the truth to say—it eagerly, almost fiercely welcomed it. Bolton and Primitive Methodism gripped each other. The first Minute Book of the Manchester Circuit shows that before the close of 1821 there were more members in Bolton than in Manchester itself, the numbers being 321 and 211 respectively. The young circuit was vigorous and enterprising. Probably the story is mythical which tells how the Bolton Quarterly Meeting having, when all expenses were met, a balance of sixpence, forthwith resolved, on the strength of that sixpence, to call out an additional preacher, who was none other than James Austin Bastow. But the Bolton Circuit officials, some of whose portraits are given, were just the men to venture much and win, as they assuredly did, if the story of their calling out
Mr. Bastow be true. But, be this as it may, the Bolton Circuit had the courage of faith in resolving, six months after its becoming a circuit, to send John Butcher as a missionary to the Isle of Man. Probably it is without a parallel that mother and daughter-circuits should come on the stations together, as was the case with Bolton and Castletown, Isle of Man, in the Conference Minutes of 1823.

John Butcher landed at Derby Haven, and "opened his mission in nearly the first house he came to." A Mr. Kelly, we are told, received him into his house, for which act of good-will he was unchurched by the denomination to which he belonged. The missionary's Journal shows that he began his labours at Castletown on Friday, January 10th, 1823, and that he went on holding services at Colby, Ballasalla, Howe, Port John, and other places in the south-west of the island.

In this Manx Mission of the Bolton Circuit we have an early and normal example of the Circuit-mission. By this is meant that the circuit has looked beyond its own doors and, assuming the functions and responsibilities of a missionary executive, has conceived the plan of sending its accredited agent to some more distant sphere. The mission is the outpost to which the circuit serves as the base. Thus regarded, the mission to the Isle of Man was the boldest thing a Primitive Methodist circuit had as yet attempted. It anticipated the Irish missions by ten, and the Edinburgh and Glasgow missions by four years. Leeds' mission to London, which took place about the same time, is the only instance we can recall that can be compared with it for boldness. The London mission was a venture that failed; the Manx mission succeeded. And yet, in some respects, the latter was the bigger venture; for the Isle of Man, though not far away as mere miles count, was over-sea, and Mona was then, much more than it is now, a little kingdom apart, with its own customs and laws and even language, so that it was something of the nature of an experiment whether Primitive Methodism would commend itself to these islanders of Celtic race, and take hold of their rich and fervid nature. The experiment succeeded. The evangel the two Butchers—the son soon joining the father—had to offer fitted the Manx people as perfectly as the ball fits its
socket. There was scarcely the shadow of persecution, unless the occasional exhibition of suspicion and prejudice may be counted such. "As we sang through the town some cried, 'Shame! shame!' We get nothing much worse than this. And on the other hand, we hear many more saying, 'It is like the old times, when the Methodists first came to the Island.'" They recognised and welcomed the primitiveness of the Methodism brought them. How the work spread in this corner of the island during these first months of the year may be gathered from a joint-letter written on May 5th from Kirk Arbory, and addressed: "Dear brethren and fathers in the Gospel." The letter, of which unfortunately only the initials of the signatories are given, is a document that cannot well be omitted.

"We have the pleasure of informing you that the preachers you have sent over to us have, by their preaching and the blessing of Almighty God, been rendered instrumental in the salvation of many souls. We have now in society about two hundred members, and the work appears to be prosperous, and as if it were just beginning; for the people flock to hear them, 'as doves to their windows,' from the distance of four or five miles, and are crying, 'Come, preach for us.' But as we have but two preachers, they can only compass about twelve or fourteen miles in length, on one side of the Island. And as we have no local preachers, we cannot reach the places as we could wish. We have some who are nearly ready for exhorters. We have begun to have some prayer meetings, and they are a great blessing unto us.

"We have begun preaching at Douglas; one of our preachers has preached there at the market-place these five Sabbaths last past, and the services have been attended by amazingly large congregations.

"We remain, in the bonds of love and fellowship,

"A. C.; J. G.; J. C.; C. C."

At Midsummer, Henry Sharman was added to the staff of preachers, and from his Journal it is clear that already the towns of Douglas and Peel had been fastened upon and made the strategic points for further evangelistic labours. During the remainder of the year, Sharman had his "rounds," foreshadowing the branches and circuits of a later time. First, we find him labouring on the Castletown side, and then, after a time, he goes into the Douglas "round," which included Laxey. It is interesting to note that Thomas Steele was very helpful to Sharman while he was in this part. He records that "he has been
made a blessing to our society in the Island," and that "we preachers believe the Lord sent him." Finally, Sharman goes for a month to more distant Peel, "a place noted for its wickedness and hardness, which gave him some concern." Land had already been secured for a chapel at Douglas. Just before the Christmas of 1823 Castletown chapel was opened; four other chapels are said to be in course of erection, and the number of members in the Island is reported as six hundred and forty-three.

For two years only Castletown stands on the stations, then it is simply "Isle of Man." Evidently Douglas soon began to take the lead, and became the residence of the superintendent. In 1842, differentiation began to show itself. We have Douglas; Ramsey-Branch; and Peel Mission. In 1849, Ramsey is a circuit, with Peel as its branch; later, Peel is re-absorbed. In 1851, Castletown is a branch; and, in 1868, both Castletown and Peel have become independent stations. Finally, when, in 1887, Laxey was made a station, the present number and order of stations were arrived at. These changes reflect the vicissitudes through which our Church in the Island has passed, and the numerical returns bear similar witness. In 1832, the number of members given is 339; next year the number is 1,000, which is also that of 1842; but, in 1837, the number had sunk to 756. It is singular that our present numerical position in the Island is practically the same as in 1842, viz., 1,089, while the number of ministers is also the same. Seasons of spiritual declension alternating with seasons of revival do not altogether, or perhaps even mainly, account for these fluctuations. Of course they have operated and left their mark on the periodic returns. But the chief explanation will probably be found in the action, more or less acute, of economic and industrial conditions determining the flow of emigration from the Island, which has right along been a serious hindrance to the steady advance of the societies. Yet, despite this hindrance, the Isle of Man still contributes one-ninth part of the total membership of the Liverpool District, and it has strongly rooted itself in the religious and social life of the Island, as the advance the Church has made on the material side during late years strikingly shows. Illustrations of this later phase of our history we hope to give hereafter; but, even confining ourselves to the earlier period, Bolton's mission to the Isle of Man must be pronounced a success both in its direct and indirect results. Names which at once betray their Manx origin are found on the muster-roll of our workers, past and present, both in the Isle and out of it. They stand side by side with the plain Saxon patronymics we know so well. The blend and association of racial qualities in Christian communion and service thus indicated has been all for good. Names such as Clucos, and Quayle, and Cain are unmistakeably Manx, and they are the names of some out of many who might be named, who served the interests of our Church in the Island during the earlier days. Philip Clucos (born 1809, died 1885) was a noted pioneer worker and evangelist in his day, and as such he traversed the Island, winning many converts. The hospitality of the Quayles, of Glenmave — of which society Mrs. Quayle was the first member — is reported of to this day. Of John Cain, of Rinshent, Foxdale,
it is said he opened his house for services, and when the farm-kitchen was too small he fitted up his barn. He was the leading spirit in the erection of the first chapel at Foxdale. His house was always open to the servants of God, and his horses at their disposal to lighten their journeys. Through the biographies in the *Magazines* we get glimpses of other early workers and befriended of the Cause. There are Jane Cubbon, who welcomed John Butcher to her father's house at Colby; Patrick Cannal, one of his first converts at Kirk Michael, and trustee and steward of the chapel built in 1824; Ann Quirk, who united with the first class at Douglas, and Ann Kaown, "whose house was unspeakably valuable in the introduction of Primitive Methodism into Douglas; John Corlett, local preacher, who, as a sailor, during ten years preached in the Shetland Isles, at the ports of Scotland and Ireland, and was afterwards for three years a devoted town missionary at Douglas; John Clague, of Ramsey Circuit, who preached for twenty-one years in his native Manx, and Robert
Tear, also of the same circuit, "whose addresses, principally given in his native tongue, were full of originality, pointed, homely and pious, aptly illustrated by references to agricultural customs."

Returning to Bolton Circuit. In December, 1823, Henry Sharman writes: "We were enabled to send the money we owed to Bolton Circuit, and were very little short in paying all besides." So that not only was Bolton nothing out of pocket by its venture, but it had also the satisfaction of knowing that by its enterprise it had added a miniature kingdom to the Connexion, and set a worthy example before other circuits. Besides the Isle of Man, other circuits have, during the course of years, been formed from Bolton, viz., Bury, Bolton Second, Darwen, Leigh, Heywood, and Horwich. Of these successive changes in internal administration, the first only falls within the first period. In the first Minute Book of the Manchester Circuit, Bury has only six members, from which fact it may be inferred that at the close of 1821 Bury had but just been missioned. In 1835, Bury stands on the Bolton plan as a branch with some fifteen places, including Edenfield, Ramsbottom, Heywood, Chadderton, Summerseat, and Ratcliffe. At the Conference of 1836 it became an independent station, with one minister and two hundred and sixty-two members.

**Oldham.**

Oldham was missioned about the same time as Bolton, and here also "thousands crowded to hear the Word of life in the open-air." There is no need to discount these words of Verity's as though they were merely a rhetorical exaggeration. Unless everybody has conspired to deceive us, Oldham camp-meetings down to, and even beyond, the middle of last century were noted for the immense throngs attending them. The Rev. W. Antliff, who spent five of the most influential years of his ministry in Oldham (1857-61), tells us that the Oldham Whitsunday camp-meeting, held on Oldham Edge, was one of the largest in that part of the kingdom. He gives the probable numbers present in 1861 as ten thousand; for that of 1858, his predecessor, Miles Dickenson, gives the estimate of fifteen thousand. But it is only fair to say that the traditional estimates of the numbers brought together at some of these annual gatherings go far beyond these figures. It almost seems as though the first Oldham camp-meeting of May 19th, 1822, had set the pattern for all subsequent ones. The site of the Oldham gathering on this famous camp-meeting Sunday—of which we wish we could have had a census of attendance and the number of professing converts—was at Bardsley, in a field lent by Mr. Brierley, of the Fir Trees Farm. The services were carried on entirely by Manchester men, of whom Walton Carter was the leader. Fourteen thousand people were said to have been present; there were two preaching-stands, five praying companies, and two permanent ones. Carter says of this notable gathering: "People of all denominations received it with approbation; while the attention of the multitude was arrested, and the hearts of many were inspired with zeal for the Lord of hosts."

This Pentecostal day, however, did not find the church at Oldham though it did strengthen it and add to its numbers. A class had previously been formed at Brook, near Bardsley, with James Wild and R. Ashworth as its leaders; and a second
OLDHAM
CHAPELS

PHIRMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH.
at Oldham, of which Peter Macdonald and F. Mannock were put in charge. Peter Macdonald graduated for the position of first leader through Roman Catholicism and Methodism. If Jonathan Ireland had, for his soul's good, rung the church bells; Peter Macdonald had, as an acolyte, tinkled the bells at the celebration of mass, in his native county of Carlow. But he got his mind enlightened when he came to England to follow his trade, abjured the errors of Romanism, and, like others here-about, passed through Methodism to join the new revival movement, which both suited him well and, as he thought, needed what help he could give. His life, culminating in a triumphant death in 1835, was written by Samuel Atterby, and might profitably be reprinted by Oldham Primitives. Besides the officials of the first generation already named, mention may be made of James Taylor, a convert of Thomas Aspinall in 1823, “one of the first and fastest friends of Primitive Methodism in the town”; J. Kent, Circuit Steward from 1829 to 1838; and W. Winterbottom, of Shore Edge, who was present at the first camp-meeting, and a local preacher from 1828 until his death about 1880.

It was in 1862 that Oldham was divided into Oldham First and Second Circuits, the latter with Lees Road as its head, including also Lees, Bardsley, Waterhead, Elliott Street, Delph, and Hollinwood. Regarding this as our goal for the time being, two lines of development as leading up to it are distinctly traceable as early as 1821. These are set before us in the entry in the first Minute Book of the Manchester Circuit: “Mumps and Oldham 160 members.” The Oldham line is comparatively simple and direct; the other, starting from Mumps and ending in Lees Road, is as zig-zag as pictured lightning. Oldham's first humble domicile was a stable in Duke Street; the next, a room in Grosvenor Street, which, becoming too small, was vacated for a small chapel in the same street, built about 1826; then in 1832, during the superintendency of William Taylor, a much larger building was erected in Boardman Street, which for a good many years was Oldham's principal chapel. As for the other society, like Moab, it seems to have been emptied from vessel to vessel and not allowed to settle on its lees. From whatever causes, it had to shift its quarters several times before it acquired a location with anything like fixity of tenure. This was in a measure accomplished when, in 1830, a room in Vineyard Street was acquired, which for ten years served for public worship and Sabbath School teaching.

1825 and 1826—“those years the locust hath eaten”—seem to have been at Oldham, as they were elsewhere, a time of trial and waste. There are eight preaching-places fewer on the plan than before, and the number of local preachers is reduced by six. But under the vigorous and methodical ministry of F. N. Jersey and his colleagues, the aspect of things somewhat brightened, and the two years—1829-31—John Garner spent in the circuit were remarkable for their prosperity. He was then in the bloom and vigour of his manhood, and at the zenith of his ministerial power. James Garner was called out as an additional preacher. Not only was Vineyard Street acquired, but in 1831 a chapel was opened at Hollinwood. Just thirty years after, a second
chapel was built at Hollinwood, and since 1880 it has stood at the head of Oldham Third Circuit. We gather that the revival which resulted in adding two hundred members to the circuit membership during these two years was marked by certain "peculiar features," not clearly specified by John Garner's biographer. Writing with an almost provoking reticence, he says: "Certain peculiar features of the work excited, in his observing mind, a degree of apprehension. He narrowly watched the movements of the parties who acted prominent parts in the public religious services. And as he believed them to be persons of real worth, and influenced by sincere motives, he honoured them with his confidence, and was thankful for their hearty co-operation." In these words, the biographer rather timidly glances at some of those physical manifestations of highly-wrought religious feeling that not unfrequently showed themselves in early Methodism, and were not altogether unknown in the beginning of our own Connexional history. Sometimes these manifestations took the form of fallings; at other times their subject would go into trance conditions, or, yet again, would leap or dance. The "peculiar features" of the Oldham revival took the form last named, as Jonathan Ireland tells us. They in Manchester heard rumours of what was going on in Oldham, and determined to see for themselves whether rumour spoke truly. Probably they timed their visit so as to be present at the quarterly love-feast held December 13th, 1829, at which, says John Garner in his Journal, "many from Manchester and other places attended; the chapel [Grosvenor Street] was crowded, and sixteen persons professed to have been made happy in the Lord during the day." Ireland speaks without reserve of the manifestations reported of at Manchester. "We had not been long in the chapel when the jumping began. It soon spread, and became general all over the chapel. But Mr. John Garner said: 'If you don't like this sort of work, you can take your hats and leave us.'" It should be noted as a fact of much importance that Ireland distinctly states this salatory habit was "confined to the best and most devoted members of the society." No doubt Mr. Garner would rather have had the gracious influences without these accompaniments; but he was a shrewd man, and, though he had kept careful watch, he could detect neither imposture nor characterless fanaticism in these phenomena. Hence he was chary of rebuke, lest haply he should root up the wheat with the tares.

On February 14th, 1836, the streets of Oldham saw a busy and every way primitive sight, interesting to us as showing that the traits so characteristic of Hugh Bourne were as strongly marked as ever, though he was now in the sixty-fourth year of his age. In the morning, he had led a class, shaken hands with all the Sunday school scholars, and then preached to them in Boardman Street Chapel; and now, in the afternoon, he was heading a procession after his own heart. There were seven stoppages for prayer, and H. B. preached seven one-minute-and-a-half sermons, plain, pointed, and, for the sake of the children, containing references to the power of divine grace as able to 'take the naughty out of their hearts, and to save them from Satan and his blue flames.' All this he describes with evident zest,
and the description is blended with counsel as to the right ordering of such services, and models of the right kind of one-minute sermons are given; and then he turns to tell, with wonderful naïveté and simplicity, the incident of the child that was his companion throughout this processary service:

"A little matter took place, which drew great attention. When we had been moving for some time, I happened to turn my head, and was aware of a little girl, of about three or four years of age, having hold of my coat, and walking by my side in an orderly manner. This a little surprised me. I put her on the foot-path to walk with some other girls; but she was immediately at my side again as before. And, however dirty the streets, or difficult, she kept her place. After we had stopped at any time to pray and speak, she was at once at her place again; and when the street was very dirty, I occasionally took her by the hand. I felt a little anxiety lest the little creature should be hurt. But all went well; and when returning to the chapel, the street being very dirty, I put her on the foot-path, and had the satisfaction to see her come safe to the chapel. And I afterwards found this little girl's conduct had drawn the attention of many."

There is something of the didactic and prophetic about this incident, which we may be sure Hugh Bourne did not, after all, consider "a small matter." Hugh Bourne and the child hand in hand, heading the procession through Oldham streets, was a lesson, and a parable of the future as well as a pleasing picture. It said: "Take care of the children. Do not repulse them and say, 'Trouble not the Master.' Have them with you. Lift them out of the dirt, and keep them from falling." And it anticipated these later days, when the young are ungrudgingly welcomed into the van of the Church's forward movements.

The picture, as thus given, is scarcely complete without a reference to Hugh Bourne's engagement on the morning following the multifarious labours of the Sabbath, which might well have brought "blue Monday" in their train. If it came, it found him still following his bent—caring for the young life. After a night's rest at his old friend James Wild's, he went with S. Atterby to Lees, to inspect the Infant School taught in the chapel S. Turner had built in 1834. H. B. compared notes with Brother Watts, the teacher, and suggested certain improvements he himself had projected, and finished up by holding a service with the children.

We close our notice of Oldham by calling attention to the portraits, which will be found in the text, of some, out of many that might have been given, of tried and faithful officials who may be considered to have been the makers of Oldham Second Station.

On the Sunday before the Coronation, July 15th, 1821, John Verity formed societies at Newton, Stalybridge, and Ashton-under-Lyne. Despite the opposition met with at the last-named place, the work prospered; indeed, so much favour did the missionaries find with the people, that they came forward willingly to furnish the preaching-room, as Verity thankfully and even exultantly records. From the evidence supplied by an old plan, it would seem that Ashton stood as a circuit in 1824. But, if so, its name does not appear on the Conferential
stations as such, and, in 1825, Ashton, together with Hyde and Dukinfield, were transferred from Manchester to Oldham; and in 1838, these and other places became the Stalybridge Circuit.

Ashton made full amends for the rough treatment of our early missionaries by some of its inhabitants. It has paid a large indemnity, by which the Connexion has been enriched. As a set-off to the hustling of Walton Carter and the imprisonment of S. Waller, it has sent forth some of its sons who have done splendid service. The Ashton society was instrumental in the conversion of three young men who were companions. One of these was James Austerbury, now spending a quiet evening after serving the Church at home long and faithfully; the second was Edward Crompton, who after spending some years in the ministry in this country, entered that of the Primitive Methodist Church of the U.S.A.; the third was John Standrin, who prior to his being sent out in 1857 by the G. M. Committee to Australia, travelled in the Knowlwood Circuit—1854-55. During revivalistic services which he conducted at Summit, on the Lancashire side of the Pennine range, a group of young men were won to the Church, some of whom were to carve their name deep in the history of our Church during the middle and later periods of its history. When we say that one of these was James Travis, another John Slater, and a third Barnabas Wild, long esteemed in the Sunderland District as a solid preacher and an upbuilder of the churches, it will be seen that Ashton is an interesting link in the chain of causes which, in the providence of God, have produced far-reaching results.

Rochdale; Stockport.

Rochdale was part of the Manchester Circuit until 1837, when it became the head of a station with five hundred members. We know the exact date when our missionaries first lifted up their voice in this important town. It was July 15th, 1821, when Walton Carter "went to open Rochdale," as he himself has told us. "Three of our society," he says, "went with me. We sang up the street at one o'clock, and collected a good many people. But heavy rain coming on, I was obliged to desist; but resumed my place at five, and preached to a very large and attentive congregation. Some were affected, and I have heard since we were brought to God."

The heavy rain here referred to may have been the identical rain-storm which, as Jonathan Ireland avers, led Jenny Bridges to take pity on the missionary, and offer him the shelter of her cellar in Cheetham Street for the service. Anyway, the cellar was Rochdale's first lowly preaching-place. The tenants of the cellar, John Bridges, the carrier, and his wife, must be numbered among the eccentrics of our Israel, yet one trait in Jane's character may be recalled to her credit. Reverence may show itself in cellar as well as in cathedral; and for that particular flag in her own cellar whereon Jane knelt when she found peace through believing, she had ever a feeling akin to reverence. She kept it clean. She pointed it out to visitors. To her it was a spot as sacred as an adorned altar.

From the cellar, a remove was made, in 1825, to a room in Packer Meadow, off Packer Street. The remove was a step upward in the scale of respectability; for we are told that Packer Street (of which we give a view, taken from an old print), was,
in those days, considered one of the important streets of the town. Though very narrow, many business and professional men had premises here; and at the top of this street was the ascent to the parish church by a flight of one hundred and twenty-one steps; while at the bottom of the steps, to the right, was the famous "Packer Spout," a well noted for its cool, clear, pure water.

The room over the cloth-dresser's in Packer Street served the uses of the society until 1830, when Drake Street Chapel was built, at first without a gallery. This, in its turn, lasted until 1862, when the present chapel was built at a cost of £2,500. Thus, for a generation—right through the mid-third of the century—"old" Drake Street was the Church's centre in Rochdale for worship and service. Many worthy people, of whom one or two only we may recall, gradually grew old and grey in attending upon its ordinances and fulfilling their varied ministries.

Edmund Holt was, for many years, the choir-master of Drake Street. Here any Sunday he might have been seen, surrounded by other instrumentalists and singers, manipulating a huge concertina. This good though eccentric man, it is said, was equally at home on the platform as in the singing pew, and by his public addresses could play on the feelings of men, by turns evoking tears and laughter. His name-sake, Thomas Holt, was of different type; quiet, modest in speech and act, a "son of consolation." Both survived until 1877. James Whitehead was another official who rendered long and important service. He threw

much energy into the discharge of his varied offices—Circuit Steward, Sunday School superintendent, class leader, and local preacher, and yet, when done, had a surplus of energy left to draw upon. When he died in 1865, it was to the general regret of the townsfolk of Rochdale, as well as of his own people. The portraits of these and one or two other early workers are given in the text.
Stockport: Woodley.

Stockport and the places thereabout for some years formed part of the Manchester Circuit. One of the early workers tells how he and his fellow "locals" used regularly to walk from four to twelve miles on a Sunday morning, preach indoors and out-of-doors, pray with penitents, and then tramp back again. When they went southward to Stockport or beyond, they would meet in the evening on the Lancashire Bridge and journey home. The first word said by one to another would be, "How many souls to-day, lad?" and often they rejoiced together over the spoil they had taken.

To some appreciable extent Primitive Methodism had been influenced by Stockport "Revivalism." The Revivalists (amongst whom probably were Ebenezer Pulcifer and James Selby of Droylesden) had carried the fire to Congleton, at which Hugh Bourne's zeal was kindled afresh. They set causes to work which turned James Steele into a Revivalist, and resulted in the conversion of William Clowes and others of the fathers. So that when Primitive Methodism entered Stockport to stay, Stockport was only getting its own with usury. From this time onward, Stockport is a good deal to the fore. It has frequent incidental mention in the records of the time, as though it were a place which lay right in the track of the Church's movements. Our founders not unfrequently came this way, and passed through or tarried here. Thus William Clowes tells us that just after the District Meeting of 1828, he came to assist in the
opening of a new chapel at Stockport (Duke Street), and found that his congregation had gained admission to the service by the presentation of purchased tickets. The same monetary arrangement obtained in 1833, when he preached the school sermons. This time he was the guest of "friend Beeston," and it had taken him two days to get from Silsden, riding, as he had to do, through heavy rains, behind an unmanageable horse. The present chapel, "Ebenezer," Wellington Road, S., was built in 1882, at a cost of £6000.

It was in 1831 that Stockport became an independent station, with John Graham and R. Kaye, a native of Bolton, as its preachers and "one wanted." Samuel Smith and Jesse Ashworth are names closely associated with Stockport's early days. The former was born at Denton, a village near Stockport, and though he removed to Leeds to serve his apprenticeship, he returned in 1834 to superintend the station for two busy and successful years. The religious services of the District Meeting of 1835, held at Stockport, resulted in the conversion of more than forty persons. Samuel Smith must be regarded as having been one of the makers of the original Manchester District. He travelled in Manchester itself and the principal stations of the District, and finished his useful life as a supernumerary-assistant at Stockport, January, 1878, aged 80 years. More than most, Samuel Smith was a preacher for the people, and he had their social and political welfare at heart. It was Stockport which first sent Richard Cobden to Parliament, and the crusade of which Cobden and Bright were the leaders had Samuel Smith's full sympathy. True, the Consolidated Minutes might say: "He, i.e., a travelling preacher, must not deliver speeches at political meetings or parliamentary elections," but Samuel Smith and a few others probably interpreted this to mean that they were only prohibited from making speeches in the Tory interest, and so reading the rule they took care to observe it strictly. S. Smith's ardent and early advocacy of Total Abstinence will be referred to when we come to deal with Preston, but in proof of his practical sympathy with the ameliorative movements of his day, it is said that he was elected as one of Lancashire's representatives on a deputation to Sir Robert Peel, and that he was one of those who pressed upon the great commoner the total and immediate abolition of the corn laws.

It was during his term in Stockport that Samuel Smith took kindly notice of Jesse Ashworth, then a youth of fourteen. He succeeded in creating in his young mind the thirst for knowledge, and especially the thirst for Biblical knowledge. He took him with him to Gatley, where the youth gave his first exhortation. He proposed him for the plan, and the same year young Jesse found himself at sixteen years of age.
a travelling preacher. This was in 1837, and the duty of placing on record the facts
and an estimate of his long and useful life will fall to the lot of the Conference of 1904.

In the roll of Stockport Circuit's early worthies the following names should have
honourable place:—J. Penny, first Circuit Steward, and local
preacher, W. Cheetham, sen., Circuit Steward, and his present
successor, W. Cheetham, jun.; J. Ashton, the first Sunday
School Superintendent; Thomas Dunning, a noted "local" and
street preacher; John Harrison, local preacher; and J. Peckston,
Chapel Treasurer and a generous supporter of the cause.

Woodley, in the near vicinage of Stockport and, since 1887,
a circuit in its own right, has had a long and interesting history.
It was opened in 1822, in the usual way, by the holding of open-air
services. It much needed missioning. The candle lighted by
Wesley had all but gone out. What religion it had was
mainly of the formal inactive type; "dog-fighters, cock-fighters
and man-fighters," on the contrary, were too active, and our missionaries had to
contend with persecution of the rude and mischievous kind. Two houses that
were successively offered were as quickly closed to us because
of this activity of the sons of Belial. Whereupon the preacher
for the day made an appeal to his out-door audience, and one
Israel Burgess felt the force of that appeal. He feared lest the
missionary should, after the manner of the apostles, shake the
dust off his feet and depart, and hence he agreed, if his family
were willing, to lend his house for the services. So much in
earnest were they, that his wife walked to Stockport to announce
to the preacher their acquiescence. Services were held here for
a time, until a room in a warehouse was taken, and then in 1835
a chapel with schools below was built. Young Jesse Ashworth
was present at the opening services which were conducted on
successive Sabbaths by Thomas Holliday, J. A. Bastow and John Flesher, the last
of whom thrilled his audience as he preached two of his great sermons—the
Penitent Thief, and the Raising of the Widow's Son.

A blessing rested on the house of Israel Burgess. A Burgess was
the mother and grandmother of the Staffords, five of whom served
for some time at least in the Primitive Methodist ministry;
the most widely known of these being Samuel Stafford (1854-90),
and his nephew, Luke Stafford, whose name is associated with
the origin of the Prayer and Bible Reading Union. Henry
Stafford, the father of the latter, was for forty-five years a local
preacher in the Stockport Circuit, and an active supporter of the
cause at Woodley. Bramall too is a name to be mentioned with
respect in any notice of the early history of our Church in Woodley.
It was Edward Bramall who began the Sabbath school in his
own house. For two Sundays only was it held here, being then removed to the ware-
house, which served until the schools below the chapel of 1835 could be utilised. In 1861 separate schools were built. Since the day when E. Bramall improvised seats for his scholars by planks placed on bricks, progress has been made. Thomas Bramall, now retired from the active ministry, was one of the band sent out by Woodley.

In or about the year 1849, the Church at Woodley was strengthened by the accession of John Lees Buckley to its ranks. By dint of perseverance he overcame initial difficulties that would have daunted a weaker man, and gained an honourable position among the manufacturers of his district. But success did not spoil him. He never lost his prayerfulness or his relish for spiritual things. Primitive Methodism in Woodley and the district owes much, especially on the material side, to the beneficence and steady connexional attachment of John Lees Buckley and his family. For twenty years he was superintendent of the Sunday school, a local preacher, a patron of the Manchester Institute, a working member of various district and connexional committees. He died January 21st, 1880, aged 65 years.
CHAPTER XIV.

THE MISSIONING OF YORK AND LEEDS.

It is time we returned to Hull to see what that Circuit was doing for the extension of the Connexion. An authentic document of the time ready to our hand may help us here. It is a letter sent to Hugh Bourne by Richard Jackson, the energetic steward of Hull Circuit. The letter, dated March 20th, 1822, reads like a dispatch from the seat of war—as indeed it was. We shall have to refer to this important letter again when we come to speak of Hull's mission to Craven and to Northumberland; that part of the letter which more immediately concerns us here is this statement: "It is two years and nine months since Hull was made a circuit town . . . and we have since made seven circuits from Hull, viz.:—Pocklington, Brotherton, Hutton Rudby, Malton, Leeds, Ripon and York Circuits." The formation of the first three circuits named in this list has already been described, and what this and the next chapters have to show is the direction and degree of the geographical extension made as registered by the formation in 1822 of the York, Leeds, Malton and Ripon Circuits. What we have now to watch and discern the meaning of is the establishment of strategic centres in the wide county of York, and the organised endeavour to occupy for the Connexion a tract of country which now forms a considerable part of the Leeds and York, and Bradford and Halifax districts.

York.

The continuous and commanding part the ancient city of York has played in the civil and ecclesiastical history of England has very largely been the outcome of its unique geographical position. Lying as it does at the entrance to the vale of York, the city has held the key to the Great North road along which armies and travellers and merchants and merchandise were bound to pass. It is no accident that the medieval city has renewed its youth as a great railway centre. York has always had to be reckoned with, and even Primitive Methodist missionaries had very early to reckon with it. They could not have given it the go-by without making both a physical and moral detour which would have meant bad strategy and personal dishonour. To evangelise Yorkshire and omit York would indeed have been to play Hamlet, and to leave Hamlet himself out. Hence, within six months of Clowes' entry into Hull, we find him confronted with the task of entering York. As though he himself were fully aware of the significance of the event, he not only gives its exact date, but a graphic description of his feelings at the time, and of the circumstances of his entry which were not without a certain dignity and picturesqueness. The account must be given in Clowes' own words; nor will the reader fail to notice his feeling of the inevitability of the duty that lay before him as evidenced by the narrative. As Christ "must needs go through
Samaria," so Clowes felt there was a needs-be that he must deliver his testimony in York.

"Being now in the immediate neighbourhood of the city of York, I formed a resolution, in the name of the Lord God of Israel, to lift up my banner in that far-famed city of churches. Accordingly, I sent a notice to the city crier to announce to the citizens of York that a 'Ranter' preacher would preach on the Pavement. But the crier sent me word that he durst not give public notice of my purpose, unless I first obtained sanction of the Lord Mayor. Here I soon found I was in a measure locked in a difficulty. It occurred to me that if I waited upon his lordship to solicit permission, he would very probably refuse me liberty; and were I to attempt preaching after a denial, very likely he would order me to prison; and then if I should pass by the city without bearing my testimony in it, my conscience would remonstrate, and my duty to God and my fellow-creatures would be undischarged; consequently, I determined to proceed and preach the gospel in the streets of the city, in conformity with the instructions which I had received from Jesus Christ, without asking permission of any one.

"Accordingly, on Monday, May 24th, 1819, at seven o'clock in the evening, I stood up on the Pavement in the Market-place, in the name of the Lord who had so often supported me in similar enterprises. I commenced the service by singing the fourteenth hymn in the small hymn-book:—

"Come, oh come, thou vilest sinner," &c.
In a short time the people drew up in considerable numbers, and the shop-doors and other places were crowded. All was very quiet until I had sung and prayed, when a man in the congregation became rather uproarious; but I got my eye upon him, and he was checked. When I had proceeded about half-way through my discourse, a troop of horse came riding up, and surrounded the congregation and the preacher. The devil immediately suggested to me that the Lord Mayor had sent the soldiers to take me, under the idea that I was a radical speaker, inciting the people to rebellion; but I rallied after this shot from the enemy's camp, and went on exhorting sinners to flee from the wrath to come. I accordingly concluded my sermon without molestation; the soldiers and people retiring in proper order. Some asked me who I was, and what I was; I told them my name was William Clowes, and that in principle I was a Methodist, and that I would preach there again the next fortnight. Accordingly, I took up my staff and travelled seven miles to sleep that evening accompanied by a few friends."

W. Clowes' promised second visit to York was not paid in a fortnight as announced; nor it would seem until some six weeks after. But before the summer was over, not only Clowes, but his colleagues, Sarah Harrison and her husband at separate times preached in the Thursday Market (St. Sampson's Square), this spot being probably chosen as better adapted for the purpose than the Pavement. Each of these services had features in common. Behind the missionary, on each occasion, we can discern the now somewhat shadowy figures of village friends and abettors especially belonging to Elvington, some seven miles distant. Here lived the brothers Bond, well-to-do farmers, whose names frequently occur in the early journals as extending hospitality to God's servants and in other ways helping to establish our cause in these parts, and notably in York. Elvington was in a sense the base for the mission to York. Clowes took his staff and travelled on to Elvington to sleep after his first visit to the city. It was while at Elvington the friends urged Sarah Harrison to enter York. The villagers by the Ouse and Derwent were proud of their county-capital, as well they might be. They were ambitious that their missionaries and their chief city should be on good terms with each other. To them York with its twenty thousand inhabitants was the big city. With its churches and minster, its Lord Mayor and soldiery and Judges of Assize, it stood for all that was distinguished and impressive. If only W. Clowes and Sarah and John Harrison would go up in the name of the Lord and take York, who could tell what great things might follow? So not only did the missionaries go, but the villagers went with them for company and support—only they went with diverse feelings. For it is very noticeable how in each case these leading missionaries of Hull Circuit went to York with a weight of anxiety resting upon them that could not be concealed, and that it was difficult to account for. It seemed as though the dread of the city rested upon them. So it was with Sarah Harrison who was the next to go. At first the cross appeared too heavy for her to take up. She was however encouraged by a promise from several to accompany her, and she accordingly went. When she was entering the North Gate and having a first view of the city her courage was shaken, and for some time she felt as if she could not preach. So it was with Clowes: "On my way [from Elvington to York] my spirit became greatly exercised; heavy trouble pressed upon me; I had an impression of fear and uneasy apprehension
respecting my mission to the city. However, as I proceeded, I recollected I had counted the cost, and however I might be called to suffer, truth would win its way and God would be glorified.” John Harrison’s experience was almost identical with the experience of his colleagues who had preceded him. “Tuesday, July 6th, I and my friend left for York. We entered the city, but the thought of having to preach was to me a great trial: I trembled with a great trembling.” These reminders that our pioneers were after all men and women of like passions with ourselves, and had their seasons when duty which they would not flee from looked formidable, are not to be disregarded, for, despite the tremors of the flesh, God was with them and enabled them to deliver their testimony in Thursday Market with power and success.

Sarah Kirkland preached to an immense crowd at the corner of the Thursday Market from a butcher’s block, obligingly placed at her disposal by its owner who was a Methodist. As for Clowes, thousands gathered round him as he preached, but though some had said “they would be taken up,” to his surprise “not a tongue of disapprobation was lifted up, all was quiet, and all heard the truth of God proclaimed with the deepest attention.” John Harrison too had a large congregation and the people “gave evidence of their approval of the truth by their tears.”

As the result of these memorable visits of the pioneers, a society of seven members was formed, and with the help of the friends at Elvington a room was secured in a building near St. Anthony’s Hall (Blue Coat School), Peaseholme Green, for the holding of services. The society’s occupancy of this room was but a brief one, lasting
only a few months. Not only had the room little to offer in the way of comfort or cheerfulness, but as the society grew its inadequacy became more and more apparent. Looking round for more eligible quarters, attention was turned to an unoccupied chapel in Grape Lane, originally built for the Rev. William Wren who had seceded from Lady Huntingdon's Connexion in 1781. After his death, three years after, it had been hired by the Congregationalists, and then in turn occupied by the New Connexion, the Wesleyan Methodists, the Particular Baptists, and Unitarian Baptists; * so that in the thirty-nine years of its existence as a building it had changed hands and denominations no less than half-a-dozen times. Many old Nonconformist meeting-houses have had

![Grape Lane Chapel. The first Primitive Methodist Chapel in York.](image)

*a strange, eventful history, but one thinks it would be hard to find one with a more chequered record than Grape Lane. Something of the outward appearance of the building, which for thirty-one years served as our denominational centre in the city of York, may be gathered from our picture. However defective it might be according to our modern standards of beauty and convenience, Grape Lane was a decided advance on Peasholme Green, and so the building was secured, G. and A. Bond of Elvington,

* I am indebted for these facts to "Primitive Methodism. Its Introduction and Development in the city of York," by Wm. Camidge, F.R.H.S. The monograph is a model of what such works should be.
S. Smith tells us, becoming surety for the rent. It was opened on July 2nd, 1820, by John Verity, John Woolhouse—both of whom had just been taken out as preachers by the Hull Circuit—and by W. Clowes, who preached in the evening. The opening services coincided in time with the formation of York as one of the branches of Hull Circuit.

From the manuscript journals of Sampson Turner now before us we find George Herod, Sampson Turner and Nathaniel West labouring together at the beginning of 1822 in the York branch, which became a Circuit in March of the same year. As this is the first time N. West's name comes before us, and we shall hear much of him until 1827, a few words respecting this remarkable man will be in place. He was an Irishman, and when we first see him in 1819, he wears the King's uniform and is known as Corporal West of the King's Bays. He was a man every inch of him; of splendid physique, more than six feet in height, and with good natural parts sharpened by discipline. Altogether he was a man to impress and look at admiringly. When his regiment was stationed at Nottingham he was drawn to the room in the Broad Marsh and got soundly converted. He soon began to preach, and became very popular. In Leeds, to which town the King's Bays shortly removed, Corporal West attracted great crowds by his preaching. While at Leeds he talked so much of the Primitives—of their zeal, their methods, their success, that the desire was awakened in many to see and hear this wonderful people for themselves. A pious young woman, a Methodist, fell in love with the handsome soldier and offered to find the whole or greater part of the money to purchase his discharge from the army. The offer was accepted, and N. West showed his gratitude by marrying his benefactress. But before this the King's Bays had removed to York, and Corporal West may have been one of the troopers who encircled William Clowes when he preached on the Pavement on May 19th. Before the summer was over he was certainly connected with the York Society, for Sarah Harrison expresses her pleasure at meeting with him on her third visit to the city just after the preaching room had been taken. By May, 1820, ex-corporal West was a travelling preacher and, as we have seen, at the beginning of 1822 we find him one of the York staff. Beyond this point we need not at present follow him.

Grape Lane acquired some notoriety at first from the persistent attention bestowed upon it by a band of miscreants—not of the lowest rank in the social scale—who resorted to all the familiar devices for annoying and intimidating the preacher and his congregation, which we need not stay to specify. Unwilling at first to invoke the law for their own protection, the Society through its officers seems to have approached Lord Dundas, who at that time was the chief city magistrate. To his credit, be it said, the Lord Mayor cast his influence on the right side and personally attended a service at which John Hutchinson was the preacher. No preacher could have wished for a better behaved congregation than John Hutchinson had that night, and it was thought that the action of Lord Dundas would have a wholesome, deterrent effect. But the persecution soon began again, and when George Herod summoned two of the ringleaders at the Christmas Sessions of 1821 for disturbing public worship, he lost his case, and was saddled with the costs, amounting to £16. "Everything appeared clear against them, yet when the trial came on, they somehow or other got brought through, which very
much injured our temporal concerns," says N. West. Naturally enough the freemen whom the authorities were reluctant to punish as they deserved, now felt freer to carry on their malpractices. On the eve of holding a great love-feast in York, N. West had to get the tickets of admission printed at a distant town and withhold their distribution until the morning of the love-feast, in order to hinder the would-be disturbers from getting access to the meeting by the presentation of tickets they had themselves got printed. By this precautionary measure "we kept a great mass of unbelief away" says N. West. This love-feast of the 24th February, 1822, was a memorable one. Though Mr. Herod was conducting a second circuit love-feast at Easingwold at the same hour, the country societies sent such large contingents that some eleven hundred persons were present, and the meeting, which was carried on for several hours until Messrs. Turner and West and the other labourers were quite exhausted, resulted in some forty conversions. It was just about this time, as S. Turner tells us, that the rebels broke the vestry window-shutters all to pieces while he was preaching, and three young men were taken up and committed to the Sessions for trial. This time the disturbers were convicted, and the reign of lawlessness was shaken though it did not end until some considerable time after. *

The first plan of the York Circuit, April—July, 1822, shows twenty-two preachers all told, and thirty-two preaching places. Of these, with the exception of York, only Easingwold has, since 1872, become the head of an independent country station. The lines of development to be followed by York as a Circuit were already in 1822 laid down. All round, at no great distance, the ground was occupied or earmarked by branches or circuits belonging to or formed from Hull—Pocklington, Brotherton, Tadcaster, Ripon and Malton. Unless it had attempted distant missions, York Circuit could only do as it has done—strengthen and extend itself within the progressive city and keep firm hold of the adjacent agricultural villages. It could not, like Scotter, Darlaston or Manchester, hope to become the fruitful mother of circuits. At the close of 1824, Tadcaster Branch was attached to York Circuit, and so continued until 1826. Probably, never before, or since, has the Circuit covered so wide an area as it did then, when four preachers were on the ground, two of whom were Thomas Batty and J. Bywater.

One of the makers of York Primitive Methodism was William Rumfitt. When he came to York in 1822, a young man of nineteen, he was already a local preacher. He at once joined the Society in Grape Lane which he found "in a low and feeble condition." This testimony finds incidental confirmation from the contemporary Journals of Sampson Turner, the first superintendent

* "Afterwards I suffered great annoyance. They came into the room—smoked, talked, let sparrows fly to put out the lights, etc. So I went to law and won. For there was another Lord Mayor who was favourable to us. He told them he would imprison every one of them on a repetition of the offence." Notes of a conversation with S. Turner taken down in 1874, with which his Journal agrees.
of the York Circuit. It would seem there were difficulties and drawbacks, having their source both within and without the Church, which retarded progress; and now and again the records betray the writer's misgiving that the whilom branch had been granted independence before it was quite ready for it. This ink-faded script in which Sampson Turner confides to us his exercises of soul, is but a sample of the superabundant evidence to hand showing that our earliest societies were peculiarly exposed to the intrusion and governance of men of mixed motives and unsanctified temper. From the very nature of the case the danger was inevitable. Sharp discipline was necessary to purge "out the old leaven;" but to keep it from creeping in again nothing availed more effectually than a few strong, righteous, far-seeing officials, always on the spot—for "the presence of the morally healthy acts as a kind of moral deodorizer." So true is this that those circuits which steadily won their way to an assured position, as York ultimately did, were, we may be sure, blessed with a certain number of these moral deodorizers—natures antipathetic to the old leaven.

William Rumfitt's period of Church activity spanned the first and intermediate periods of our Connexional history. As we have seen he joined the York Society in 1822, and it was in 1879 that devout men carried him to his burial. He was a local preacher during the whole of that long period, and a class-leader during a considerable portion of it, besides filling other offices. Two nights in each week were devoted by him to the public exercises of religion. In 1857 he was elected a deed-poll member, and so seriously did he take this trust that for twenty-one years in succession he was never absent from his place in Conference. While his house was a kind of "pilgrim's inn" he took care that it should also be a Church in which Bible-reading, praise, prayer, and talk about good things formed the constituents of the domestic atmosphere. It was according to the fitness of things that the children nurtured in such a home should carry on the family tradition; and John and Charles Rumfitt (now LL.D., and a clergyman of the Established Church) both entered the ministry, the former travelling for forty-one years (1852-93) with great acceptance. He first began to preach about 1845 in association with Mr. George Wade who also from 1835 to 1871 was a useful class-leader and prominent official of the York Circuit. John Rumfitt's biographer intimates that at this time—that is in the "Forties"—Grape Lane was at its best, and York Circuit one of the most prospering and flourishing circuits in the Connexion.

Perhaps the very success of Grape Lane in these closing years of the first period was one chief cause of its undoing and final supersession. Though the Church improved, Grape Lane and its locality did not improve, but rather degenerated as time went on. The approach to the building and its environment were equally objectionable; and its structural shortcomings seriously interfered with comfort and the efficiency of church-work. Many schemes for securing a more eligible centre were
canvassed, but with little practical result until, under the vigorous leadership of Jeremiah Dodsworth, what had been deemed almost too much to hope for was achieved. A family mansion in Little Stonegate was bought for £800, and on the site of the demolished building Ebenezer Chapel was erected and opened in November, 1851, by Jeremiah Dodsworth; two famous divines, Dr. Beaumont and James Parsons, also preaching sermons in connection with the notable event. A new era in York Primitive Methodism began by the dedication to the service of God of Ebenezer, which right through and beyond the middle period of our history was the recognised centre of Primitive Methodism in York. How many old Elmfieldians retain vivid recollections of the march to and from the plain chapel in Little Stonegate hard by the venerable Cathedral! With it, too, are inseparably associated recollections of Sir James Meek, as yet our only Knight and man of title, who it must be confessed wore his honours meekly and discharged his civic and Church duties with true gentlemanship and modesty. H. J. McCulloch had his title too, being almost invariably known as "Captain," and he was for some years actively associated with Little Stonegate; at one time indeed having charge of the service of praise. It was in 1853 that Alderman James Meek transferred his membership from the Wesleyans and brought his class with him. As a leader, he was conscientious in the discharge of his duties. It was no uncommon thing for him to travel from Scarborough, or wherever he might happen to be at the time, for the express purpose of meeting the members of his class. Though we thus couple Sir James Meek and "Captain" McCulloch in the same paragraph, because Providence made them contemporaries and fellow-citizens and colleagues in church-work, it is none the less true that they were very different men. Propinquity showed them to be a pair of opposites. Not only were they marked off from each other by external differences in appearance, tone, manner, but these differences ran down into still deeper underlying differences. Yet both were identified with Ebenezer and interested in its prosperity, and both, though in contrasted ways, played their part in those wider connexional movements, near the vortex of which York was brought by the founding in 1854 of Elmfield school with its rudimentary ministerial training college, and by the establishment in 1866 of the Primitive Methodist Insurance Company with its managerial office at York. To these we shall return in considering the origin and development of our Church institutions. Meanwhile, let it be noted that the fact of the Conferences of 1853 and 1864 being held at York seems to indicate that
by this time York had come to be regarded as one of the leading circuit-towns in our Israel.

Jeremiah Dodsworth, the builder of Ebenezer, deserves more than a passing reference here, and this for various reasons, one such being that from the year 1839 to 1864, during which period his active ministry extended, he laboured in Leeds, Malton, Keighley, Burnley and other Circuits with which we must shortly concern ourselves. Mr. Dodsworth was the most eminent scion of a family which both in its parent stock and its offshoots—in Hull, at Aldershot, and even at the Antipodes, has done much for Primitive Methodism. John Dodsworth, the father, who died in 1860, aged 84, was a fine specimen of patriarchal piety, and the mother was equally distinguished for her feminine graces. Their irreproachable character gave reality and lustre to the village church of Willoughby, five miles from Hull; indeed, it may even be said to have owed to them its very existence and continuance. For their dwelling for many years did double duty as a place of public worship and house of entertainment for the preachers, and when at last the chapel was built, it stood at the corner of John Dodsworth's garden, the site being a deed of gift from his master by whom he was highly esteemed. Something of the old saint's character may be gathered from one of his dying utterances: "I am climbing up Jacob's ladder on my hands and knees, and there is not a spell from bottom to top that I have put there. It was built by mercy—all mercy."

It may not be generally known that even before Jeremiah Dodsworth had become a most effective and popular preacher, he had already proved himself a Free Church stalwart and champion of the down-trodden agricultural labourer from which class he sprang. As such he figures somewhat prominently in Cobbett's "Legacy to Parsons," of all books in the world, the reason being, that Jeremiah Dodsworth was one of the last to refuse payment of tithe on labourers' wages—one of the most obnoxious forms of impost soon after swept away by the legislative besom. He was charged a tithe of four shillings and fourpence on his wages by the Rev. Francis Lundy, rector of Lockington, whose living was of the annual value of £532; and on his refusal to pay, two Justices of the Peace, the Rev. J. Blanchard, another pluralist clergyman, and Robert Wylie, sentenced him to pay the four shillings and fourpence and the costs of prosecution. He, still refusing to pay, the same two magistrates issued a warrant of distress against his goods and chattels. But he had no goods and chattels to distraint; so Rev. John Blanchard as magistrate committed him to the House of Correction at Beverley, there
to be kept for the space of three calendar months as punishment for not paying his “offerings, oblations and obventions.” * This “village Hampden” and hereafter successful chapel-builder and popular preacher has yet stronger claims for remembrance here, as having in his later years become one of the most popular writers our Church had as yet produced. At this epoch, as we know, many very earnest and clever people were making it their special business to popularise the advancing Puseyite theology. This was their mission and they fulfilled it sedulously; and so tales and biographies and histories poured from the press, subtly flavoured with sacramentarian and high-church sentiment. In like manner, Jeremiah Dodsworth, in his own way, sought to popularise the old Evangelical theology. The theology was there in its substance and essence, but, above all his books were readable, written in a pleasing, flowing style, and making strong appeal to the indestructible feelings of men. “The Eden Family,” and “The Better Land” especially, like James Grant’s kindred book, “Heaven our Home,” and our own John Simpson’s “The Prodigal Son” were good exemplars of the popularised Evangelical theology and sentiment, and had a vogue far beyond their writers’ own churches.

Great an advance as Ebenezer was on Grape Lane, the time came when “Tekel”—“Thou art found wanting”—was seen to be written on its broad front. For many years the impression deepened that after a half century’s occupancy, the time had come for this honoured sanctuary to make way for a successor that should worthily mark the attainment of a further stage of Connexional advance. The ampler school and vestry accommodation so sorely needed could then be provided, and the new building might be so located and planned that it would serve as the pro-college chapel and in other respects fittingly

* “Cobbett’s Legacy to Parsons.” The facts are also referred to in “Methodism as it should be,” 1857, p. 249. Neither of these authorities gives the slightest hint that Mr. Dodsworth did not serve out his sentence. But Rev. H. Woodcock in his “Primitive Methodism in the Yorkshire Wolds” (p. 113) says: “But he was released, and we believe Mr. B. paid him £20.” If the clergymen paid the fine and costs it should be put down to his credit. But as yet diligent inquiry has not enabled us to verify this point.
represent the oldest interest of the denomination in the metropolitan city. Accordingly preparations were cautiously made to effect the desired change. In advance, a block of property in Monkgate was bought for £1,000, and the rents of this in time enabled the trustees to redeem the cost of purchase. The debt on Ebenezer was cleared and the building sold for £2,000, and in 1903 the "John Petty Memorial Church" was opened. We give an illustration of this building as well as of Monk Bar contiguous thereto; "Bar" being the local name for the gates by which the walls of York, 2½ miles in extent, are pierced.

But even this does not complete the story of York's enterprise in chapel-building. Forty years ago a mission was started across the river on the south-west part of the city. The mission prospered, and in 1864 a room was opened in Nunnery Lane to serve as a chapel and Sunday school. "Ultimately," says Mr. Camidge, "the people of the Nunnery Lane Mission Room built Victoria Bar Chapel as it has always been called. It is situate just within the opening in the Bar walls, which opening gives access to and from Bishophill and Nunnery Lane." * The chapel was opened in the spring of 1880, and in 1883 York Circuit was divided, Victoria Bar becoming the head of York Second Circuit.

**Leeds.**

We are fortunate in knowing the exact date when Primitive Methodism was introduced into Leeds, as also the events which led up to it. It was on November 24th, 1819, when Clowes "opened his mission" in the already growing West Riding town "by the direction of the providence of God." In these carefully chosen words Clowes may be supposed to refer to those seemingly detached and fortuitous events he does not stop to detail which, in the hand of Providence, had become a chain to draw him to Leeds, as before he had been drawn to Hull. "By the direction of the providence of God!" so might Peter have spoken of his arrival at the house of Cornelius, or Paul

* "Primitive Methodism: Its Introduction and Development in the city of York."
of his first landing in Europe to publish the gospel. Our chief source of information as to these preparatory conditions and happenings accounting for Clowes’ entry into Leeds, is a communication addressed to George Herod by the Rev. Samuel Smith, who was one of the most prominent actors in the events he describes. It may be claimed for the facts detailed by S. Smith, that they are not only interesting in themselves as throwing light on the origins of Leeds Primitive Methodism, but that they have a still higher value, as serving to relate Primitive Methodism to that type of religious activity and phenomenon of the time we have called “Revivalism.” After all that has been written, we need not once more indicate what is sought to be conveyed by that word, or stay to show again that Revivalism was largely a survival and recrudescence of primitive doctrine and experience, and of old-time methods of evangelisation. It will be enough to remind ourselves that, right along our course thus far, from Mow Cop to the Humber and back again by the Peak to the Mersey, we have seen this fervid aggressive type of religious life manifesting itself, in ways regular or irregular, banned or tolerated. It would be strange indeed were we to miss in Leeds, of all towns in England, what we met with in Nottingham and Hull and Manchester. We think of Leeds as a freedom-loving town. At this particular time it was a stronghold of Nonconformity. Methodism had struck its roots deep in the life of the people. Not many years before, the town and neighbourhood had been set on fire by William Bramwell’s ministry of flame. In such a town one would naturally expect to find those whose proclivities lay in the direction of Revivalism to be, not less but rather more numerous than elsewhere, and a knowledge of the ecclesiastical history of Leeds would but justify the expectation. But narrowing our view: it was a band of Revivalists, Primitive Methodists in spirit,
though not in name, who were responsible for W. Clowes' coming to Leeds. Through them Providence lifted the beckoning finger and the signal was obeyed.

The Rev. S. Smith tells us that in 1818—the year William Bramwell suddenly expired in Leeds—"he commenced a mission in the low places of Leeds and the vicinity, and in a little time he was joined in it by John Verity and thirteen young men—all zealous to employ their spare time in the work of visiting and preaching to the low, degraded and neglected dwellers in yards, alleys, back streets and cellars. Not one of them, except John Verity, was connected as a preacher with any religious community, but upwards of one hundred persons were through their labours brought to God and joined some religious society." As yet they had not as much as heard of Primitive Methodism as an organised form of aggressive religion; but they were soon to hear. First of all, during the summer of 1819, Corporal West of "The Bays" was billeted with his troop in the town. He did not hide his light under a bushel. Alike in his preaching to which he zealously gave himself, and in conversation, he spoke of his recent conversion at Nottingham through the instrumentality of the Primitive Methodists, whose preachers he extolled, awakening the desire in many to see and hear them for themselves.* Then in the columns of a certain Hull newspaper called the Rockingham, there were occasional notices of a strange people who had made their appearance in that town and were carrying all before them. Of course the notices were

* See Memoir of Rev. John Hopkinson in the Magazine for 1859, p. 386, where however the writer, Rev. H. Gunns, speaks of "a Mr. West, an officer of a regiment of cavalry," evidently with no knowledge that this person was identical with the soon-to-be Rev. Nathaniel West.
both facetious and spiteful. They were described as "wearing brown coats, strong shoes and corduroy small-clothes; as having all things in common, and also that they had eaten up the whole substance of several farmers." These paragraphs were read with interest, for though the notices were coloured and even distorted by the prejudiced media through which they had passed, these Leeds Revivalists were still able to perceive several points of similarity between the "Ranters" and themselves, one being that they were both "spoken against" for trying to do good in unconventional ways; so that what they read only inflamed their desire to know more of the community jibed at by the Rockingham. Finally, the rumour went that the "Ranters" had now reached Ferry Bridge, whereupon counsel was taken, and it was arranged to send John Verity and J. Atkinson, "Esq.," of Hunslet, to get to know all they could respecting the people about whom there were such strange reports. The deputation seems to have proceeded to Ferrybridge early in September,* and what success it met with, together with the rest of S. Smith's story, he shall be allowed to tell in his own words:—

"Mr. Atkinson called on Mr. Joseph Bailey, who kept a boarding-school, and with whom he had been partially educated. Messrs. Atkinson and Verity were much surprised to find that Mr. Bailey was a member of this new community. He introduced them to the preacher for the day, the late Samuel Laister, of Market Weighton, who preached in the open air, and published for John Verity to preach in the afternoon; with which appointment the latter complied. While J. V. was engaged in the preaching service, a passenger on the London and Leeds coach—'The Union'—saw him, and, knowing him, reported the circumstances to the Methodist Leaders' Meeting on the Monday following. Action was taken upon it, and John Verity, in his absence, was suspended from his office as a leader, and a Mr. Brooks was appointed to attend his class on the Tuesday evening. When John Verity returned on the Tuesday, I made him acquainted with the doings of the Leaders' Meeting as far as I had heard. His class met in the Wesley Chapel vestry in Meadow Lane. I accompanied him to the meeting where we found Mr. Brooks, who stated his case, and absolutely refused John Verity permission to pray with the people; but he did pray, and Mr. Brooks sang during the time. I begged J. V. to retire, as such doings could be of no service. We retired to his house and talked matters over, and agreed to write to Hull, inviting the 'Ranters' to visit Leeds, and promising we would join them. We that night wrote a joint letter, addressed to 'The Ranter Preacher, Hull.' The contents of the letter were to the effect that, if a preacher were sent to Leeds, we would provide for him board and lodgings for three months in order that he might make a fair trial. The parties agreeing were John Verity, J. Atkinson, Esq., J. Howard, surgeon, and Samuel Smith. To this letter we received an answer in a few days signed 'R. Jackson, Circuit Steward,' saying:—'We will send a preacher as soon as we have one at liberty; in the meantime we advise you to go on, plan your preachers, open new places, and form classes,' etc. They also sent three hundred hymn-books and one hundred rules which had been drawn up at the Nottingham Preparatory Meeting a few weeks before. On the Thursday following I formed a class in Mrs. Taylor's [house], at the top of

* S. Smith says about the last Sabbath in August. But as they had previously read in the Rockingham of the opening of West Street Chapel, which was not opened until September 10th, it cannot well have been before the 17th September.
Kirkgate, and John Verity formed one at Mrs. Hopkinson's, in Hunslet Lane. We made a plan, and on it we had seven preachers; and we then proceeded to open places, being known only by the name of 'Ranters.' We opened Mrs. Taylor's cellar for preaching, and Mrs. Hopkinson's house—both in Leeds. We entered the villages of Armley, Busten Park, Hughend, Hunslet, Woodhouse-car, and Wortley. In each of these places we formed a class."

So much for the series of occurrences which led to Clowes' first visit to Leeds. S. Smith then goes on to speak of the circumstances of the visit itself. The account he gives is in substantial agreement with that Clowes himself gives twice over in his Journal, although, when the two accounts are compared, we recognise differences in detail, reminding us in an interesting way that our knowledge of the simplest event of history is, after all, only relative and approximate; that no two persons will quite independently write of what they once saw and took part in without their narratives exhibiting variations. What seems clear when we compare and harmonise the two versions is, that Clowes was accompanied to Leeds by Mr. John Bailey, the schoolmaster of Ferrybridge, and that, indirectly at least, through him, the Thursday evening service was held in the schoolroom in Kirkgate belonging to Mr. Bean. Clowes remarks that as some of the people left this service, they were heard to say that what they had been listening to was "the right kind of stuff." Next day Clowes went on to Dewsbury and preached there for the first time in the house of Mr. J. Boothroyd. For the Sunday services Messrs. Smith and Verity secured a large room in the third story of Sampson's waggon warehouse, in Longbalk Lane, used by a dancing master on the week day; and Clowes also employed the bellman to go round the town announcing that "A Ranters' preacher from Hull would preach in Sampson's warehouse, on Sunday morning, at ten o'clock." When Sunday came, the first service ended without any special incident, but in the afternoon, while a Mr. Hirst was conducting the service, an interruption occurred. The redoubtable Sampson himself, whom Clowes graphically describes as bent on opposition and full of subtlety, came to the top of the stairs and cried that the building was falling, and a stampede began, which was only stopped by Clowes striking up the hymn: "Come, oh come, thou vilest sinner." After an exhortation by Mr. Bailey, it was given out that another service would be held in the evening, and the congregation dispersed; but when the hour for evening service came, it was found that Sampson had hung a padlock on the warehouse door, and they were fain to hold their service in Mrs. Taylor's cellar instead of in "the upper room." Clowes admits that Sampson and his padlock had for the moment nonplussed him; but he thankfully records that, as usual, the devil had outwitted himself, for a man came late to the warehouse, expecting a service, and, finding the "door was shut," was led to reflect that so also it might be at last when he came up to heaven's gate if he did not there and then repent, which, happily, he did. S. Smith records that during this visit Clowes met the members—fifty-seven in number, in Mrs. Hopkinson's house, and incorporated them with the Primitive Methodist Connexion.

W. Clowes always claimed to have been Hull Circuit's leading missionary to Leeds and its neighbouring towns and villages—and with good reason. It is evident from his published Journal, as well as from private documents in his hand in our possession, that
the experiences he met with during these pioneer visits made a deep impression on his mind and were often recalled. He knew what it was to endure privation and suffer inconvenience. At first accommodation was poor and not always available, except when paid for, and it behoved him to be careful in spending the circuit’s money, in view of possible embarrassments. Hence, he was sometimes in straits and had to lodge where he could—occasionally in rather strange places. But a change for the better soon took place, and we find him thankfully recording: “I now had my home with Mr. Smith at the top of Kirkgate, whose family offered to shelter me at all times of my need. I cannot help reflecting on the change that I have experienced in these circumstances. When I first came to Leeds I lodged in public-houses, and went supperless to bed.”

Still, Mr. Clowes’ visits to these parts, though pretty frequent, were only flying ones, and, unless there had been some reliable men on the ground, a permanent interest could scarcely have been built up. But there were such reliable men who, as personal factors in the upbuilding of Primitive Methodism in Leeds and around, demand recognition. Messrs. Verity and S. Smith almost immediately entered the ministry, but their places were taken and their work carried on by others. Two of these also became travelling preachers—John Hopkinson and John Bywater—but not until they had rendered effective service locally, while John Reynard remained on the ground until his death in 1854, and was a tower of strength to the societies.

John Hopkinson, born at Ardsley near Wakefield, in 1801, was the son of the Mrs. Hopkinson in whose house W. Clowes enrolled the members of the first class. He received his first spiritual good amongst the Wesleyans, but when John Verity was expelled for complicity with “Ranterism,” he joined the new community. His reasons for doing so, as stated by himself, are worth giving. They were:—(1) His strong attachment to J. Verity, who was his guide, philosopher, and friend. (2) The simple, pointed style of their preaching was congenial to his taste. (3) Their open-air movements he cordially approved. (4) Their field of action found employment for talents of the humblest order. So, under the stress of these views and considerations, he became a Primitive Methodist. He undertook the leadership of the society at Dudley Hill, though it was eleven miles from his residence. In 1820 he began to preach, and three years after he entered the ministry, and for thirty-five years he continued in active service. In summing up his character and work his biographer has stated: “He was an exemplary Christian and a laborious minister. . . . He was connected with the admission of 3700 members into society; his prayers were pointed; his sermons well arranged and powerful; he travelled on twenty-five stations. He faithfully served God and his generation, and his end was peace.”

* Memoir in the Magazine for 1859, p. 391.
John Bywater is a name that calls for rehabilitation. He has received but scant recognition and fallen into undeserved neglect. Until the late Dr. Joseph Wood chivalrously vindicated his name, little remained to show the kind of man he was, and how worthy to be remembered by the denomination he served so well. True: there is the official memoir in the Conference Minutes of 1870, but there is little else; and that memoir is so short that it can be given here in its entirety without making undue demands on our space. Says the official penman:—

"John Bywater was a native of the town of Leeds, Yorkshire. In his youth he was converted to God and united with the Primitive Methodists. He commenced his itinerant ministry at the Conference of 1825, and subsequently laboured in and superintended some of the most important circuits in the Connexion. For five years he was General Missionary Secretary. He was superannuated by the Conference of 1860, and died at Cote Houses in the Scotter Circuit, October 12th, 1869, aged 65 years."

Between the facts here stated and the shortness of the notice there is a striking disparity. We need not go into the reasons for this studied brevity and speedy relapse into silence. The reasons—if reasons there were, hold good no longer, and it is time we saw the man in his true perspective and proportions. If he did through inexperience and shattered health fail comparatively as a farmer, on his enforced and somewhat early retirement, he had not failed as a chapel-builder, as an administrator, as a preacher, as a friend, as a Christian minister. Thus much is due to his name. In Leeds, young Bywater was true and loyal. During the early troubles which overtook the society, we are told that John Hopkinson and John Bywater were true comrades and yoke-fellows; "they stood firm for Connexional rule, and almost laboured themselves into the grave to save the cause from wreck; and success crowned their efforts."

The allusion here made to the storm-cloud which burst over Leeds Primitive Methodism in the early days, calls for a little fuller reference before we go on to glance at one or two other workers. "Revivalism," as we have defined it, did Primitive Methodism some good; it also did it some harm. So Leeds, like other places, found to its cost. Revivalism helped to found the Leeds Society, and it all but succeeded in shattering it. We have, in writing of Hull, referred to the group of preaching and praying women—notably Ann Carr, Miss Williams, and Miss Healand—who carried on evangelistic labours in Lincolnshire and the East Riding of Yorkshire. There is evidence to show that the Misses Carr and Williams were counted as Primitive Methodists, and not merely accepted as unattached auxiliaries. At the March, 1820, Quarter Day of the Hull Circuit, a letter was sent to Miss Carr asking if she were willing to enter the ministry. Ann Carr was born at Market Rasen in 1738, and died June 18th, 1841. In Leeds she and her friend Williams laboured hard and formed many friendships. There was a good deal of the masculine in Ann Carr's composition, and neither she nor her colleague took very kindly to the yoke imposed by a regularly organised Connexion. They preferred to hold a roving commission and to take an erratic course, letting fancy

---

or circumstances determine their direction and procedure. It is intimated by Mr. George Allen that they had no predilection for the plan, but were quite willing on invitation to take the pulpits of those who were planned, and that misunderstandings and collisions were the natural result. Being called to account for irregular movements associated with officiousness, they took offence and, parading their grievances, made a division. A chapel was ultimately built by the separatists in Leyland, which became known as Ann Carr's Chapel. This interest was sustained with varying success for a long period. At length signs of physical and mental failure began to show themselves in the once vigorous woman, and a short time before her death Ann Carr went back to her first love and reunited with the Wesleyans, who purchased her chapel. A "Life" of her was published, peculiar in this that it is almost silent as to her former connection with our Church. Any one unacquainted with her career would never suspect on reading the book that she was at one time so prominent a Primitive Methodist. The memoirs in God's book are written with greater impartiality.

When the clouds rolled by, John Reynard was found at his post. Born in 1800, Mr. Reynard was converted through hearing Gideon Ousley (the famous Irish evangelist), on one of his visits to Leeds. He united with the Wesleyans and remained with them until 1820, when he was invited by S. Smith (whose sister he married) to attend the preaching service then held in a house in Hill-house Bank.

"He acceded to the invitation and was edified and blessed; so much so that he said to his friend: 'I shall walk into the country this afternoon, and if the society be as lively there as it is in Leeds I shall join you.' The two walked to Armley for the afternoon service. Mr. J. Flockton preached, and the same Divine influence attended the Word as had been felt during the morning service in Leeds. Mr. Reynard, therefore, decided to cast in his lot with our people, and on May 16th, 1820, he joined Mr. J. Dutton's class. When Mr. Dutton was taken out to travel he was appointed to take charge of the class, and continued its leader for many years."—Memoir in Magazine, 1855, pp. 193-4.

The estimate of Mr. Reynard's character, as given by Mr. Petty in his "History," needs no revision. It is just and discriminating, and hence worthy to be handed down as a carefully written judgment based on personal knowledge.

"Mr. Reynard, says Mr. Petty, soon became a useful and distinguished member. Possessing promising talents, he was speedily called to exercise his gifts in public speaking, in which he proved to be more than ordinarily acceptable and useful. He had a sound judgment, clear views of evangelical truth, a retentive memory, a ready command of language, a distinct utterance, and considerable power over an audience. His pulpit and platform efforts were highly estimated everywhere, and were frequently in requisition, both in his own circuit, and in numerous other stations. For thirty-four years he devoted his energies to the work of a local preacher, and reaped a large measure of success. He was an enlightened and ardent friend of the community.
of which he was an ornament, and took a large share in its most important transactions. He was not only a leading man in his own circuit, where his influence was great, and beneficially exerted; but was likewise raised to the highest offices of trust and responsibility which the Connexion could confer upon a layman, being constituted a permanent member of Conference, which he regularly attended, and at which he rendered valuable service. He pursued a sound course in matters of Church business, and studied to promote the best interests of the Connexion. For some time previous to his death, it was evident to his friends that he was ripening for the garner of God. He became increasingly dead to the world, and more spiritual and heavenly in his temper and disposition. His removal to the celestial country was affectingly sudden. On Sunday, December 17th, 1854, he attended his preaching appointment at Kippax, near Leeds, and while engaged in prayer in the congregation, his voice began to fail, and the last words he was heard to utter, were, 'Lord Jesus, bless me! O God! come to my help!' A paralytic stroke deprived him of speech, and of the use of his right side. He lingered until the Wednesday following, when he expired without a lingering groan, aged fifty-four years. On December 24th, 1854, 'devout men carried him to his burial in Woodhouse Cemetery, and made great lamentation over him.' He died comparatively young; but he had been permitted to perform a large share of useful service in the Church of Christ, and to the glory of his Saviour's name."

It is pleasing to know that fifty years after Mr. Reynard's death the family has still its representatives in Leeds Primitive Methodism. We give the portrait of his amiable daughter, the late Mrs. Brogden, whose husband, Mr. Alexander Brogden, was an earnest worker in our Church, and for many years superintendent of Quarry Hill Sunday school; while Mrs. Brogden herself (obit December, 1902) was for ten years a class-leader, and also a successful Sabbath school teacher at Quarry Hill and Belle Vue.

If John Reynard was the Primitive Methodist bookbinder, John Parrot was perhaps for a considerable time its best-known printer. His imprint is to be found on "The Primitive Pulpit" and many other books and pamphlets printed in the 'Fifties and 'Sixties. A native of Hull and connected with Mill Street Society he removed to Halifax in 1835, where he became a local preacher. Two years after he settled in Leeds, where he lived and worked until his death in 1871. He was a hard worker, and what was less common in those days—a lover of fun and frolic. He filled and fulfilled many offices, but probably the best and most lasting work he did was his Bible-teaching. There are those occupying important positions in the Church to-day who will be ready to express their obligations to the genial printer.

In 1820 Leeds was made a branch of Hull Circuit, and it is an interesting coincidence that Samuel Laister, the first Primitive preacher the deputation heard on their visit to Ferrybridge, was one of the first preachers of the Leeds Branch. Samuel Laister was
a native of historic Epworth, and was of Methodist parentage. In the *Methodist Magazine* for 1784 there is given a remarkable dream of the Last Judgment dreamed by the father of Samuel, to which his conversion and that of his four brothers was directly attributable. He removed to Market Weighton and became a Primitive Methodist local preacher, and in September, 1820, went out to travel. We shall soon meet with him again at Malton, and especially at Darlington, where he finished his course. From a branch Leeds became a circuit in 1822, having no fewer than ten preachers down for it on the stations, of whom John Coulson is the first. The same year Quarry Hill chapel was built, which through many changes still survives as one of the historic chapels of Primitive Methodism. This year was also notable for the action taken by the December Quarterly Meeting in sending two missionaries to London, of which we shall have to speak more fully in another connection. In 1823 the fourth Conference was held at Leeds. Apart from the action taken in regard to the new hymn book,* perhaps the most noteworthy transaction of this Conference related to the establishment of a Preachers' Friendly Society. It was ordered that one preacher from each circuit should attend a meeting at Hull, on August 24th, for the purpose of making the needful arrangements, but with the fettering proviso that "the preachers shall not be allowed to beg for the establishing of the fund." We are not surprised to learn that this restriction, felt to be so galling, was removed the very next year. Though the religious services in connection with the first Leeds Conference are said to have been powerful and fruitful, and the hospitality of the Leeds friends exceedingly hearty, yet, we are told by W. Clowes, there were several matters of a trying nature to occupy the attention of the delegates. As a whole, considerable progress had been made during the year, but some of the circuits had become embarrassed, and the Connexion was entering within the penumbra of its temporary eclipse. The Conference over, Hugh Bourne thought it his duty to write an admonitory letter to the preachers,† at the same time asking them to contribute towards the relief of the embarrassed circuits. The appeal met with little response—four pounds, which included one pound given by himself, being the net result. This moved him further to address "A Private Communication," reflecting strongly, upon certain "runners-out of circuits," and pointedly calling attention to particular cases of irregularity. The drastic character of this "private communication" naturally created heart-burnings, and ensured warm discussions at the annual meeting at Halifax. Of the second Leeds Conference—that of 1818—of which Thomas King was the President, and Emerson Muschamp, of Weardale, the Secretary, little need be said, as it does not appear to have been concerned in any weighty matters.

Let some of the administrative changes through which the original Leeds Circuit has passed be briefly chronicled. First, Bradford (to be hereafter referred to) was made a Circuit in 1823, then Otley was taken from Leeds, and for two years (1824-5) ranked as an independent circuit. Dewsbury also stood on the Conference Minutes—1824-8—as a circuit in its own right. Afterwards both Otley and Dewsbury reverted

* See *ante.*, vol. ii., p. 10.
† "A number of our Yorkshire circuits, with one in Derbyshire, and some of the Lancashire circuits, are considerably embarrassed; and some of them are grievously embarrassed."—H. Bourne's Letter to the Preachers, June 6th, 1823.
Information respecting the history of Primitive Methodism during the first period is regrettably scanty. We are, therefore, all the more beholden to Mr. George Allen for his published jottings on our history in Leeds.* Mr. Allen became a scholar in the Sunday school, then conducted in Shannon Street, as early as 1823, and afterwards an active and useful official of the Leeds First Circuit. To him we are indebted for a few facts relating to the genesis of the Leeds Second and Third Circuits which shall be given in his own words:

"A Mr. William Armitage, who lived in Wheeler Street, Bank, Leeds, about 1833, removed to Park Lane, and carried his religious influence with him. A prayer-meeting was held at Mrs. Blakey's, Hanover Square, afterwards. On Sunday nights a preaching service was held at Mr. Tyas', in Chatham Street, and in a short time a class meeting was held on Monday afternoons at Mr. Tyas'. Thus the work spread until they took a room in Park Lane, which had been a joiner's shop. Then Rehoboth chapel and the houses connected with it were built (1839), the Lord being their helper. But before this, preaching services had been commenced in a yard in Meadow Lane. After that they built a chapel in a yard because, I suppose, they could get the land there at a cheap rate. . . . The chapel at Holbeck was parted with in about 1836 and Prince's Field Chapel built, which is now in Leeds Second Circuit; Park Lane (Rehoboth) being in the Third."

The facts here given may usefully serve as points de repère, but we want something more. Fortunately we get some side-lights illuminating the facts here barely given from the lives of Thomas Batty and Atkinson Smith, who were the ministers of Leeds Circuit from 1831 to 1833. In these two years they made full proof of their ministry, with the result that there was an increase of three hundred to the membership of the Church. We have already indicated what were the outstanding features of Atkinson Smith's character and ministry. These were never more conspicuously in evidence than during his two years' term in Leeds. His biographer, who travelled in the Leeds Circuit in 1842 and took his bride, Sarah Bickerstaffe, to the preacher's house at

Quarry Hill, adduces the testimony of a Leeds class-leader to the influence of Atkinson Smith’s prayers and labours. When we know that the class-leader in question was John Reynard, and that it was in his house the young preacher resided, the testimony is weighty indeed.

"‘Leeds Circuit,’ says Mr. Reynard, ‘owes its rise in a great measure to the prayers of Atkinson Smith.’ And then, pointing to his chamber floor, he observed: ‘I have known him be on these boards for four hours together, agonising in prayer.’ I [C. Kendall] found many who owned him as their father in Christ. . . Among many others to whom his labours were made a blessing was Mr. Thomas Ratcliffe, who became a well-known minister of our Church."

In 1832 Leeds suffered severely from the visitation of the cholera. As in Manchester, so here, during the ravages of this fell disease, special attention was given to open-air services. "The preachers were set at liberty from their week-night appointments that they might concentrate their efforts on the living masses of the town." Atkinson Smith did not shrink from visiting the cholera hospital to "rescue the perishing and care for the dying."

Here is an extract from A. Smith’s Journal relating to Bramley, now Leeds Fifth Circuit, with which we close, for the present, our notice of Leeds.

"September 13th, 1831.—I went to Bramley, a place containing five or six thousand inhabitants. We have only ten members, and seldom more than twenty hearers. I resolved to re-mission the place; Wm. Pickard joined me. We took a lantern, went to the bottom of the village, and began to sing ‘We are bound for the Kingdom,’ &c. Three hundred people accompanied us to the chapel. I preached to them, but not with my usual liberty; yet the revival began that night, and in a short time forty or fifty persons found the Lord.’ ‘To this day,’ adds the biographer, writing in 1854, ‘the people of Bramley speak of Smith’s seeking a revival with a lantern and candle.’"
CHAPTER XV.

THE YORKSHIRE MISSIONS AND MALTON AND RIPON CIRCUITS.

"When I look at the work in Yorkshire, it is amazing! Many chapels are built, and the land generally spread with living Churches, and hundreds of souls brought to God." So Clowes wrote in March, 1821, and the purpose of this chapter is, if possible, to convey the impression that the wonder expressed by Clowes concerning "the work in Yorkshire" was natural and justified by current events and by what resulted from them: in other words, it is to be attempted to show that the wide and rapid extension of Primitive Methodism through the agency of Clowes and his fellow-workers of the Hull Circuit in 1820-1 is, so far as this side of our island is concerned, the outstanding fact to be noted and made to yield its impression.

Rigid adherence to the chronological order of circuit formation would, for once, fail to do justice to the facts of our history and gain from them the right impression. York, Leeds, Malton, Ripon were the only circuits in this part of Yorkshire made in 1822; yet, by that time, all the country lying between these towns was overrun and as it were pre-empted for the Connexion. Tadcaster, Driffield, Scarborough, Bridlington, might not permanently become Circuits till long after, probably because they were comparatively close to Hull and under its fostering care and guardianship; none the less, these and other Yorkshire towns, with the villages they served, were once for all won for the Connexion by the movement of 1821-2. Primitive Methodism paid no transient visit, but entered to stay. It was only when Yorkshire had been thus traversed and practically secured, that the North was almost simultaneously reached by two distinct lines of advance—the one via Brompton and Guisboro', the other via Ripon and Darlington. We propose then in this chapter to show how this base was secured, and in doing so, the most natural course will be to begin with Tadcaster—whose borders marched with those of Leeds on one side and with those of York and Brotherton on the other—and then to follow the geographical spread of the movement which swept Yorkshire in what Clowes, who was in the midst of it, thought an amazing manner. This method is all the more necessary as, even after June, 1820, when branches were formed, their boundaries were often crossed. What with frequent interchanges and sallies and excursions it is difficult to locate the preachers. They are now here, now there, pursuing the work of evangelisation. Practically the East and North Ridings were during this period one big Circuit.
Tadcaster.

We begin then with the ancient and interesting town of Tadcaster, lying on the direct road between Leeds and York, from which towns it is fourteen and nineteen miles distant respectively. It is also on the Great North Road and, with its ancient bridge crossing the Wharfe, it was as the postern-gate to the city of York. Its position accounts for the fact that the two most decisive and bloody battles recorded in English history—Towton and Marston Moor, were fought within a few miles of the town, while, in 1642, Sir Thomas Fairfax and the Earl of Newcastle contended in the streets of Tadcaster itself for the possession of the all-important bridge.

Primitive Methodism was introduced into Tadcaster as early as June 1820 by Nathaniel West who, like John Flesher, began his ministry here. So successful was N. West's Tadcaster mission that, by September, he could report that one hundred and thirty-nine members had been enrolled in the town and neighbouring villages which were assiduously visited. His three months' labour resulted also in the acquisition of a chapel, by which we are probably to understand the renting and fitting up of the room in Wighill Lane, shown in our picture. Tradition says that this had formerly been used by a sweep, and that at this early stage of the society's progress three soldiers, whose duty it was to serve as escort to the post from York to Wetherby, rendered good service. Before leaving Tadcaster for the Malton Branch, N. West took part in the opening services along with J. Farrar and Mrs. H. Woolhouse, of Hull, and her travelling-preacher son. After being in use for two years, the first chapel was built in Rosemary Row. This building, we are told, ultimately fell into the hands of the Roman Catholics who, in order to
erase the words "Primitive Methodist Chapel," had a cross cut in the stone-work between the windows. If the old chapel was thus perverted, the "Applegarth," the old camp meeting site, picturesquely situated by the river Wharfe, where for fifty years camp meetings were wont to be held, was interdicted to the society. Here, in 1825, W. Clowes took part in a famous camp meeting. But Tadcaster is a brewery town, and, on the field being let to a brewer, its owner stipulated that no more camp meetings should be held therein. The present chapel, it may be mentioned, was built in 1865, at a total cost, with schoolroom, of £1008.

We cannot linger on Tadcaster. It is now a small and, numerically, feeble station; but its history shows that, relatively, it was formerly of much greater importance than it is to-day. The town has held, and more than held, its own. Some places have been given to Selby Circuit; but there has been shrinkage in relation to the village interests, which old journals and documents show were once numerous and comparatively vigorous. The towns and large urban centres had not begun, like the fabled Minotaur, to deplete and devour the village populations. It may be worth while to indicate in a separate paragraph (which the reader can skip if he choose) the vicissitudes through which the Tadcaster Circuit has passed. The record may be regarded as typical of many that might be given, and as not being without historical value as suggesting the difficulties which the retention of our village circuits has involved.

The Tadcaster mission of Hull Circuit, opened by Nathaniel West, June, 1820, became a branch of Hull Circuit in September of the same year, and so continued until the close of 1824, when it was attached to York Circuit. In 1826 it was constituted part of the "Tadcaster and Ferrybridge Circuit." It stood on the Minutes as an independent station from 1827 to 1837, in which latter year it had
214 members. Henceforward, until 1850, it was once more a branch of Hull. It assumed circuit rank again in 1851-2. From 1853 to 1863, inclusive, it was a branch of Scarborough. Lastly, in 1864 it was again made a circuit, and as such has continued.

During its long and somewhat chequered history, Tadcaster has had a succession of staunch adherents who have stood by the cause in sunshine and shade. We find the name of John Swinden figuring in documents of the early 'Thirties. He and his wife Elizabeth were converts of W. Clowes in 1825, and ever since 1835 there have been two of this name on the plan. The Rev. John Swinden, a scion of this family, is one of the goodly number Tadcaster Circuit has sent into the ranks of the regular ministry. Of these the Rev. Wilson Eccles is another modern representative. Three of the aforesaid Elizabeth Swinden's brothers—Atkinson by name—became useful local preachers, while a fourth was class-leader. Thus we see again the hereditary principle at work.

**Ripon.**

When Ripon is mentioned, we are not to think merely of the pretty though somewhat sleepy city on the Ure, with its ancient Cathedral of St. Wilfrid, together with its adjacent villages, which represents the Ripon Circuit of to-day. Rather are we to figure to ourselves a tract of country stretching from the borders of Leeds and Tadcaster Circuits to Middleham, and from the valley of the Nidd to Thirsk, comprising what are now the Harrogate, Knaresboro', Pateley Bridge, Thirsk, Ripon, Bedale, and Middleham Circuits. They took seizin of this country for the Connexion, though as yet all of it might not be effectively occupied. The Ripon Circuit, formed in 1822, ultimately grew to be with its branches one of the most extensive Circuits in the Connexion, and, after 1824, when it was incorporated with the newly formed Sunderland District, it was travelled by some of the best known and most capable ministers of that District.

W. Clowes opened Knaresbro' as early as October 24th, 1819, by preaching "abroad" amid wind and rain at nine o'clock in the morning, and in a dwelling-house in the evening. On the Tuesday following, he preached in a different part of the town and formed a society of four members. Two other visits to Knaresbro' were paid before the year closed, and kindly mention is made of an old Scotchwoman, Mary Brownridge, who bade him welcome to what her house afforded. At already fashionable Harrogate "the uncircumcised fastened the door of the house he was in" to prevent his egress; but he got out at the back of the premises. At Killinghall, hard by, he preached in a joiner's shop and in the Wesleyan Chapel, and while at family prayers next morning at the house of Mr. Swales, two of his servant-men cried out for mercy. It was while tramping through the snow from Harrogate to Leeds that Clowes had his encounter with a gentleman riding a very fine horse, who proved to be the Vicar of Harewood. The long discussion between them led Clowes to indulge in sundry reflections, one of which was that, notwithstanding all his privations and sufferings, and the toil and persecution he suffered as a missionary of the cross, he would not exchange situations with the Vicar of Harewood, "for," adds he, "my religion makes my soul happy." Mr. Clowes also visited Whixley, the home of the Annakin family, and Burton Leonard,
where a good society was formed, and especially Marton-cum-Grafton. Here Mr. Mark Noble, a Wesleyan, incurring censure for countenancing and aiding and abetting the missionary, felt constrained to join the society that was formed, and henceforth freely extended hospitality to the preachers. In the revival which took place at this time, Mr. Thomas Dawson, by far the ablest and most influential official of the Ripon Circuit in the early days, was brought to God. He entered the ministry, but was obliged to relinquish it after eighteen months' trial, his strength not being equal to the heavy demands of the work. He located in the Ripon Circuit, and as an evidence of the respect entertained for him by his brethren, who well knew his loyalty and the value of his counsel, he was elected a deed poll member at the Conference of 1856. The Rev. Colin C. McKechnie, who knew him intimately, has left a pen-and-ink sketch of Mr. Dawson, which we have pleasure in quoting.

"Mr. Thomas Dawson was, beyond question, the most gifted of all our laymen. He was well-informed, had a keen perception, and a logical mind. Nothing pleased him more than taking part in a debate; and if he had anything like a good case in hand, he was almost sure to win. Indeed, if the case were bad, the chances were in his favour, for he had the faculty of making the 'worse appear the better reason.' He delighted in the society of the preachers, and in meeting them at his house. Afflicted with asthma, he was at times compelled to sit up at nights, as he could not lie. At such times if a preacher happened to be with him, he would spend hours in discussion, the subjects often being of an abstruse and metaphysical nature. One night I spent with him was devoted almost entirely to the discussion of

'Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute.'

And he seemed to forget all his ailments in the polemical ardour with which he repelled the Calvinistic views taken of those high subjects. Mr. Dawson was a thoroughly good man, upright, devoted, zealous in Christian work, and an out-and-out Primitive."*

Mr. Clowes entered the city of Ripon for the first time on March 4th, 1820. A local preacher being planned at the Wesleyan chapel on this Sabbath whose face was almost unknown to the congregation, Clowes was privately pressed to take his place, and at last consented. The service was a powerful one, and either the preacher's matter or manner betrayed him, for, when the congregation were dispersing, one said, aloud: "If these be 'Ranters,' then I am a 'Ranter.'" The evening service, we are told, was held in the house of Mr. B. Spetch, in Bondgate, and in the prayer meeting which followed, William Rumfitt and Moses Lupton, afterwards General Missionary Secretary, and President, were two out of fourteen who professed to find the Saviour. A strong society was almost immediately formed, which received numerous accessions from the somewhat frequent visits to Ripon paid by Clowes during the year, as noted in his published Journal. As early as June, 1820, Ripon was made a branch, and in September three preachers were stationed to it, viz., James Farrar, Robert Ripley, and John Garbutt.

A month after we find W. Clowes taking part in the opening of a new chapel at Martin-cum-Grafton, and once more we meet with Mrs. Woolhouse assisting in the services.

Amongst those who travelled the extensive Ripon Circuit in the first period were several with whose names and work we shall become familiar in writing of the Northern District; men like John Lightfoot, John Branfoot, William Lister, W. Dent, John Day, Thomas Southron. Nor should we omit mention of Mary Porteus, who was on the circuit's staff of preachers from 1828 to 1830. On the intellectual side she must be regarded as taking a high place amongst our female itinerants. She did not come behind any of them in piety and zeal, and she excelled most of them in preaching power. The Rev. W. Dent—a competent judge—has said of her, "that it was really a privilege to hear her preach, for she had both the requisite gifts and grace." Mary Porteus was a native of Gateshead and entered the ministry in 1826, taking circuit work until 1840, when enfeebled health compelled her retirement. For one of her sex and constitution Ripon was an exacting station. Some idea of the physical toil involved in the working of such a Circuit may be gathered from the statement of the Rev. W. Lister that, during the three years of his superintendency of the Ripon Circuit, 1835-8, he had walked 2,400 miles.

In speaking of the early history of the Ripon Circuit it would be almost unpardonable to make no reference to Joseph Spoore, who had so much to do with the shaping of that history. In a very real sense he made his mark on the Circuit, and it was equally true that the Ripon Circuit left its mark on him, for it was while labouring, as he only could, in the Middleham Mission of this station—forty-seven miles in length and twenty in breadth—that he broke down in health, and had to superannuate for a time. Yet he was no weakling. Indeed, when Thomas Dawson secured him at the District Meeting of 1835 for the Ripon Circuit, well knowing he "could toil terribly," he was in the full vigour of his powers. He had a compact, sinewy, agile frame. He was courageous as a lion, and yet he could show on occasion of an emergency much tact and resourcefulness. He made no pretension to learning or eloquence. He spoke out in plain Saxon, and the themes on which he discoursed presented little variety; but his own soul kindled as he spoke, and the old themes were all aglow like Moses' bush that burned unconsumed in fire. Added to all this, there was at times a dash of eccentricity about his movements both in and out of the
pulpit which attracted the attention of men and made him popular. Many of the well-known incidents associated with his name occurred during his term of labour in Ripon and its various branches, which term was remarkable for a great revival of religion—one that was not restricted to a few places but spread over nearly the whole Circuit. New societies were raised in several places, and others that had seriously declined were revived. It was just after this revival that the Circuit was formed into branches.

In 1837, Mr. Spoor was appointed to labour on the Thirsk and Bedale Mission. At the village of Langthorne the outlook was at first exceedingly unpromising. But he was told there was hope for the place if only John Hobson, the tallest man in the village, could be won for Christ. Thereupon Mr. Spoor and his colleague, W. Fulton, covenanted to pray at a given hour each day for the conversion of this village champion and son of Anak. Shortly after this, John Hobson was drawn by some irresistible influence to a service conducted by Mr. Spoor. Unmistakably enough it was he; for, like Saul, he towered head and shoulders above the rest. John Hobson was converted and became the leader and staunch supporter of the village society.

In December, 1837, Mr. Spoor was appointed to open a Mission at Boroughbridge. It was while preaching on a village-green near this old town that he had his encounter with the Anglican priest who in his wrath threatened to stop him. To this Mr. Spoor replied: "There are several ways of stopping you, but there's only one way of stopping me. Take away your gown, and you dare not preach; take away your book, and you cannot preach; and take away your rich income, and you won't preach; while the only way to stop me is by cutting out my tongue." Of course the retort was not original; but it leaped forth on occasion like a trenchant impromptu and shows the readiness of the man.

Mr. Spoor and Fulton were dragged before the magistrates by an officious policeman for a service which they held in Ripon Market-place. It seemed that despite all they might say they were to be sent to prison. Spoor rejoiced at the opportunity of suffering for the sake of the Gospel and shouted: "Glory be to God! the 'kittie' for Christ!" but a prominent citizen came into Court, expostulated with the magistrates and put a new face on the matter. It is said that a long and able letter appeared in the newspaper insisting upon the right to conduct worship in the open air, and reflecting upon the conduct of the policeman and the magistrates, and that the letter was from the pen of Dr. Longley, then Bishop of Ripon, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.

But, to our thinking, an incident narrated by Rev. C. C. McKechnie shows Mr. Spoor in a still more attractive light. Mr. McKechnie had as a lad of seventeen just arrived from his distant home in Paisley to begin his labours in the Ripon Circuit. Rather cruelly, his superintendent had made him preach in the city on the very evening
of his arrival, and the service had been to him a trying one. The next day as he sat in his lodgings he was much cast down. The rest of the story shall be told in Mr. McKechnie’s own words:

"Something like despair settled upon me, and it seemed to grow thicker and faster. In the early afternoon, as I sat in my room brooding over the past, present and future, I wrote all sorts of bitter things against myself for having ventured upon such an enterprise, so unfurnished for my work, and so ignorant of what I was doing. Whilst thus depressed and desponding the tears coursing down my cheeks, my room-door opened, and Mr. Joseph Spoor walked in. And here let me say with thankfulness, his coming was like the visit of an angel of God. His presence brought a blessing with it. A more peaceful, spiritual, brotherly face I had never looked upon, and the tones of his voice had a healing and reviving influence upon my poor bruised heart. He seemed to comprehend my case in a moment. I cannot express the fulness and sweetness of his sympathy, or the gentle but effectual way in which he swept away my brooding fears. ‘Oh, dear, no! I had no reason to be despondent; that was the work of the enemy. I might be sure my way would brighten. Get on? Oh, yes! I would get on beyond doubt. I must look up and trust and pray and work, and all would turn out well. I would meet with many kind-hearted people who would help and cheer me in every way.’ With such words as these, backed by a few mighty words of prayer, Mr. Spoor exorcised the evil spirit, and left me a new man. Yes; I may truly say I was made a new man; a new life inspired me. I now felt ashamed of my
cowardly fears. No; I would not succumb to the difficulties of my lot. I had come out into this field of labour in response to what I believed to be a divine call, and I would, by the help of God, prove myself worthy of it."—(MS. Autobiography.)

MALTÖN AND PICKERING.

We give, below, the ministerial fixtures for September–December, 1820, made by the Hull Circuit authorities:

"Hull.—William Clowes, John Hewson, Edward Vause, and John Armitage.
Brotherton.—John Woolhouse and John Branfoot.
Pocklington.—John Verity, John Harvey, and William Evans.
Ripon.—James Farrar, Robert Ripley, and John Garbutt.
Tadcaster.—Thomas Johnson, John Abey, and Samuel Smith.
Leeds.—Samuel Laister and Thomas Nelson.
Malton.—Nathaniel West and John Lawton.
Driffield.—Robert Howcroft.
Bridlington.—John Coulson."

Rightly regarded, this prosaic-looking record is full of significance. It illustrates yet again W. Clowes' judgment as to the "amazing work" carried on by Hull in 1820–2. It is only one year and nine months since Primitive Methodism was introduced into Hull, and yet no inconsiderable portion of the broad-axed county has been divided up and allotted to the preachers of the Hull Circuit. Still, this record is manifestly incomplete, for it leaves out York, where, as we have seen, a chapel was opened in July, 1820, and several preachers whose names stand on the Minutes of the first Conference have no mention in this table. Another thing we may learn from this record: It shows that the towns and slices of country we are writing of are not to be regarded as isolated and independent, but as parts of one whole to be operated upon by a simultaneous movement directed from Hull.

At this early period the preachers were usually changed every three months, and sometimes even oftener than that. They were transferred from one branch of the circuit to another like Salvation Army captains by the head-quarters staff. They are all Hull Circuit preachers, but are shifted from branch to branch like pawns on a chessboard. Was the shortness of the term of service conducive to concentration and intensity of labour? Perhaps so. With three months only available to justify his appointment or otherwise, the days were precious and not to be let pass without crowding them with work. Hull Circuit had a long arm, and held its preachers with a tight hand. At each quarter day inquisition was made of a minute and searching kind, embracing not only inquiries as to the preacher's success as a soul-winner, but extending even to the cut of his hair and coat, and the correctness of his deportment. As late as 1832, a preacher, whom it may suffice to name J. P., was suspended, "for being late at Easterington Chapel, lying late in the morning, speaking crossly at Preston to some children when taking breakfast, and, finally, for eating the inside of some pie and leaving the crust!" The charges were on the face of them petty enough, but probably there lay, behind, the conviction that the brother was unadapted and unadaptable to the work he had undertaken.

The record given above may also serve as a recapitulation and forecast. Hull home-
branch, together with Pocklington, Brotherton, Hutton Rudby, York, Leeds, and Tadcaster, have been referred to. Now, by 1820, we see that a beginning has been made with Driffield and the Wold-towns. "Brillington" means that the sea-coast of the East and North Ridings, over and above Holderness, has to be missioned; while "Malton" means that the country lying north of Pocklington and the Wolds and between the Hambledon Hills and the sea-coast, and stretching northwards to the Cleveland Hills, has to be attempted. Nor must we forget that Hutton Rudby is already an independent circuit, and, by 1822, will have reached Guisborough. So, although the discovery of the rich beds of hematite are still in the future, and no one as yet dreams of the busy iron-towns which one day will stand on the flats by the estuary of the Tees, still in that direction the country, such as it was, had by 1822 been penetrated by our missionaries.

Speaking generally, the work of Hull Circuit at this time was carried on and its successes gained in a country possessing few towns of any magnitude. Of necessity, it was mainly village evangelisation that was carried on, and the Journals of the missionaries show that in the East and North Ridings scores of villages were entered, converts won, and causes established in the short space of two or three years. Once more we may question whether we have not lost ground, and have not to-day fewer village interests than we had in the pioneer days.

All important is it for us to know what was the religious condition of this district at the time of its first missioning, and what ameliorative influences were brought to bear upon the people by the new evangel. Even yet there are parts of the North Riding which are wild and thinly populated, as any one who has walked from Pickering to Whitby will know. Eighty years ago the inhabitants of these moors and dales were indeed a people remote and secluded. Our missionaries penetrated into scattered villages that were sadly neglected. We are not without reliable evidence on this head. The late Canon Atkinson* tells us that, when he became parish clergyman of Danby in 1846, the days were but lately passed when one clergyman had charge of three, and in one case he knew, of four parishes, making one service a Sunday and a modicum of visitation on week-days a thing to be desired rather than actually enjoyed. Yet, though what would be called pluralists, these clergymen were but poorly paid, their pitance barely reaching the proverbial forty pounds a year. Mr. Carter, the Vicar of Lastingham, got only £20 a year and a few surplice fees. True: he was an expert angler, and caught sufficient fish with his line and hook to serve his family, and to effect a change in kind with his neighbours. Still, he felt the pinch of poverty and, to add to his income, he hit upon the expedient of having refreshments served up between the services in the Saxon crypt. At the archidiaconal visitation he told his ecclesiastical superior that "he took down his fiddle to play a few tunes, and then he could see that no one got more drink than was good for him, and if the young people proposed a dance he seldom answered in the negative."† So the church, which was the earliest seat of Scoto-Irish Christianity, was turned into a public-house! We know we are

* "Forty years in a Moorland Parish."
† "Slingsby and Slingsby Castle," by Rev. A. St. Clair Brooke.
describing a state of things, as regards the Church, long since gone by. But our point is, that the poverty and helplessness of the State-Church in those remote parts must have created a condition of things needing a powerful remedy. If the official clergymen were not merely overworked and underpaid, incompetent or spiritless but, as was too often the case, lax in conduct, still more urgent was the need of heroic measures in order to reach the dull and alienated minds of the people. It was of a clergymen in Cleveland, lying intoxicated in the ditch, that one said to another, contemptuously: "Let him lie [lie]; he'll not be wanted till Sunday."

That Methodism kept Christianity alive in these northern dales Canon Atkinson handsomely concedes. He might probably hold that Methodism was only acting as the locum tenens until the Church should return to take up her assigned duty. But be this as it may, he admits the fact that, in the parts he knows so well, Methodism and Primitive Methodism had conserved the gospel. When, prior to his institution into his benefice, he saw what was to be his church, littered, ill-kept, with its shabby altar, he says:—

"I could understand the slovenly, perfunctory service once a Sunday, sometimes relieved by none at all, and the consequent sleepy state of Church-feeling and worship. I could well understand how the only religious life in the district should be among and due to the Wesleyans and Primitive Methodists."

Some of the first travelling-preachers on the Malton Branch sent pretty full Journals of their labours to the Magazine. From these we take an item or two that may help us to understand how and wherefore the Word of God spread so rapidly in these parts. One of these early workers and journalisers was William Evans. He was one of eight who were taken out to travel by the September Quarterly Meeting of 1820, and began his labours in the newly-formed Malton Branch. He was so zealous a missionary that he did not stint his labours to the fulfilling of his planned appointments. Measured by the standard of the plan he performed works of supererogation. He records in his Journal:—

"Saturday, October 6th, 1820.—Had no appointment, but being informed that the people at Hayton were desirous to hear us, I travelled fourteen miles and preached to them, and the Word did not fall to the ground: three were brought to the Lord, and one drunkard went off with the solemn inquiry, 'What must I do to be saved?'"

With a spirit like this, so alien from all that was perfunctory, actuating the pioneer workers, one can the more readily understand why village societies on the Upper Derwent and in the Vale of Pickering should multiply as fast as the cells of the yeast plant, and that by May, 1821, N. West should be able to record that in six months four hundred members had been added to the Malton Branch.

Another excerpt from the Journals gives us a picture of a camp meeting of the olden time—a picture worth preserving, because, like the camp meetings held on the Wrekin, Scarth Nick, and Mow Cop itself, it was staged and framed amid grand and impressive scenery. God can work His "greatest wonders" in souls renewed and sins forgiven in

a disused brick-field or on a bleak moor, but when the wonders of grace are wrought among the wonders of Nature both become the more impressive. So S. Smith felt when he wrote:—

"August 19th, 1821.—Attended Pickering Camp Meeting. We opened at half-past nine. We sung and prayed; and brother Hessey preached. The praying companies then drew out and took up five stations, and the scene was beautiful and interesting—five large companies wrestling with God in a pleasant valley. On one side was an ancient castle, with its cloud-capt towers, the ruins of which were awfully grand. Another side presented a distant view of the town of Pickering. Another view gave the lofty quarries of limestone. On another side was a large plantation of lofty and majestic trees of different kinds. Through the valley ran a winding brook, calling to mind these lines:—

‘Our time, like a stream,
Glides swiftly away.’

But at the important moment the sound of prayer and praise was heard through the valley, and five large companies pleaded with God for precious souls. One soul got liberty in this time of prayer, and when the usual time had been spent, the companies were called up by the sound of a horn to the waggon. When we had gone through the services of the day we concluded the field-labours, and retired to hold a lovefeast in the chapel, where, after two or three had spoken, the work of the Lord broke out on every hand. Thirty or forty souls were crying for mercy; others were praying with them. I never before was eye-witness to so glorious a work. Twenty-two souls professed to receive pardon of all their past sins, and a determination to flee from sin for the time to come. At the same time we had preaching on the outside to those who could not get in. Glory, glory to God and the Lamb for ever."

The opening of the chapel referred to in the preceding extract had taken place four months before (April 22nd), and was of such a character as to show that the occasion was regarded as a notable event in the town and district. N. West, in his sanguine way, estimates the number brought together at five thousand. No less than seven preachers took part in the services held simultaneously within and outside the chapel. Jane Ansdale (afterwards Mrs. Suddards) had now begun her useful ministry, and to her was assigned the honour of preaching in the chapel both afternoon and evening.

Other chapels built at an early date in this part were Swinton, opened August 13th, 1820; "John Oxtoby was with me," says S. Laister, the opener, "and the Lord gave us many souls;" Malton, opened October 13th, 1822, by John Verity, then travelling on the adjoining Pocklington station; and Kirby-Moorside, the lowly building acquired in 1824 serving until 1861, when it was superseded by a better one. But Leavening Chapel, opened by John Verity, October 8th, 1820, has more frequent mention in the early Journals and documents than any other, probably because of its association with the eccentric Robert Coultais, the correspondent and frequent travelling companion of John Oxtoby.
and also because the pious clergyman of the neighbouring parish of Acklam occasionally worshipped within its walls.

The best account we know of Robert Coultas is a brightly-written memoir from the pen of the veteran Rev. Richard Cordingley, who travelled at Malton in 1826, and at Pickering in 1856. In that memoir—worth disinterring from the Magazine and printing in extenso—Robert Coultas is rightly described as "an extraordinary man." He would never consent to stand higher than the first on the list of exhorters, but yet having ample means, he would go on extensive religious tours and evangelise in his own peculiar way—much prayer interspersed with conversation-preaching. "When Robert had worked his body down, he used to return home, tarry awhile, and then commence again in some neighbourhood whither he thought Providence called him, with a companion or without, as the case might be. He laboured with great success in various villages and towns, still following his old habit of returning home to rest when exhausted with excessive toil." He was present at the Pickering Annual Camp Meeting of 1856, and though Mr. Cordingley had not seen him for thirty years, he knew him at once by his loud and unmistakable "Amen." He laboured in the prayer meeting after the lovefeast with all his heart and strength. "Souls, as usual, were converted; for never," said he, "had we a camp meeting at Pickering without souls being converted." He quietly fell on sleep, June 13th, 1857, aged 86 years.

As early as 1819, W. Clowes notes hearing "a truly gospel sermon by Mr. Simpson" in the church at Acklam. The same evening Clowes himself preached in a house, and he records with satisfaction, not untinged with surprise, that Mr. Simpson came to the service and gave him the right hand of fellowship. Sampson Turner, too, when preaching in Leavening Chapel, October 9th, 1822—"as compact a little chapel as ever I saw"—had Mr. Simpson as a hearer, and notes in his Journal that "he is favourable to our people, and I believe a truly converted man." We meet, during the course especially of our earlier history, with so many clergymen of the type of the parson of Brantingham, who "advanced in a very menacing attitude" towards Clowes when the latter was preaching, and then "suddenly turned to the right-about and wheeled off the ground," that it is a relief at last to come upon one clergyman in the East Riding of quite another spirit.* Our first missionaries were menaced with the clenched fist of the parochial clergyman much oftener than they were offered the right hand of fellowship. All honour then to him of Acklam who, if well-accredited stories be true, went to such lengths of friendliness to our Church as got him into trouble with the ecclesiastical authorities. What would the archdeacon say when told that parson Simpson not only frequented conventicles and welcomed itinerant preachers to bed and board, but had actually caused a notice to be put up in the church-porch, which read: "No service. Gone to the camp meeting"! Of course he was censured and prohibited from attending any more conventicle services, and so we have the further picture of the

*Rev. W. Garner speaks of Brantingham as "a place noted for rabid opposition to religious liberty." It was here Mr. Garner first met with vicar John Gibson's notorious pamphlet against the Primitive Methodists. To this he gave a trenchant answer in his "Dialogues between the Rev. J. Gibson, B.D., the Vicar of Brent, with Furneux Pelham, Herts, and Martin Bull, Primitive Methodist."
clergyman taking his stand, sometimes even amid frost and snow, by chapel door or window, to listen to the sermon.*

As a circuit, Malton has had a continuous and steady-going existence since 1822. Until the formation of the Leeds District in 1845, it stood in right chronological order on the stations of the Hull District, just after Pocklington and Brotherton, *i.e.*, Pontefract, Circuits. Though Pickering was made a circuit in 1823, the arrangement was premature, lasting for that year only, and it had to wait until 1842 before it was again granted circuit independence. The parent circuit was left with two preachers and 470 members, while Pickering began its course with 347 members and three preachers, of whom, it is interesting to note, John Fawsit was the third.

It would be unpardonable were this history to contain no further reference to one who, as an ardent and gifted Bible-student and author, deserves to be ranked with J. A. Bastow and Thomas Greenfield. They are few indeed still surviving who remember his bright personality and his enthusiasm for learning; for he died in 1857 at the early age of thirty-seven, just when his literary powers were ripening. But though J. Fawsit died comparatively young, his application had been so intense that several books came from his pen that deserve to live. The best of these are "The Sinner's Handbook to the Cross" and "The Saint's Handbook to the Crown," the latter revised for the press on his death-bed. These books are written in a devout practical spirit, give evidence of wide reading, and in the allusiveness and occasional quaintnesses of their style remind us of some of the lighter Puritan writers. J. Fawsit was born at Scotter, and entered the ministry in 1841, the same year in which J. Bootland, J. R. Parkinson, D. Ingham, and J. T. Shepherd, well-known preachers of the old Hull District, began their toil. After travelling at Retford, Leeds, Malton, London, and Bradwell, he settled down at Wellow in the pleasant Dukeries, and did good service to the Connexion to which he was so attached. To no one whom we have known—certainly to no Primitive Methodist—would the title, "The Earnest Student," be more appropriate. He was not born to affluence. He had to labour for the support of his family, and, next after his religious duties, he made that his chief business, but books he would have. One of the most vivid impressions of our boyhood is the mental picture of his large library, with Sir Walter Raleigh's "History of the World" standing out among the rest (a title that struck our youthful mind as a tolerably large order).

*The strange story of how John Verity won a chapel from the squire by his preaching seems too well authenticated to be summarily dismissed; but it is not given in the text, for the simple reason that, when the above was written, no reliable evidence had been obtained as to the name and situation of the village in question. We, however, were inclined to locate the village in the neighbourhood of Malton, because the story is linked in time and locality with Verity's introduction to the clergyman, whom we took to be Mr. Simpson. Just before going to press, the Rev. W. R. Widdowson informs us he has come across a note of the late Rev. S. Smith, which states that the village was Scagglethorpe, near Malton, and that the chapel thus strangely acquired continued to be used by us until the demise of the squire, when it passed out of our hands. The story is told at full length by the late Rev. Jesse Ashworth, Aldersgate Magazine, 1899.
But J. Fawsit was no mere book-worm: he was a student. The writer of his memoir says truly:

"His love of knowledge was a passion, and it never cooled. ... His application was most intense and protracted. At three o'clock in the morning, in the depth of winter, his lamp might have been seen burning; indeed, till weakness compelled him to desist, he spent very few hours in bed. He was a self-taught man, and did honour to that class of individuals who undertake to educate themselves. He travelled much, and had acquired the habit, not only of reading as he walked, but of writing too; the first draft of much that he published was first put on paper in this way."

Earnest students of the type of John Fawsit are sparingly sown and rare in any community. But it so happened that the newly-formed Pickering Circuit could show two such uncommon growths. Besides its junior minister, it had for one of its leading officials John Lumley, whose life affords another striking example of self-help and strenuous mental culture. Robert Coultas and John Lumley were both products of the pleasant Vale of Pickering, and yet they differed as widely as any two sincere Christian men of the same community can possibly do. One lived largely in the world of books and thought, of which world the other knew little and for which he cared still less. While Fawsit would appreciate the good points of the extraordinary strolling evangelist, he would be drawn to the thoughtful druggist of Kirby-Moorside by force of strong affinity. He would find in him a kindred soul, and by congenial intercourse the already strongly-marked bias of each would be confirmed. Men like John Lumley, George Race, John Delafield, and others who might be named, are as genuine products of Primitive Methodism as John Oxtoby, Robert Coultas, or W. Hickingbotham. They always have been, and will be still more in the future, an indispensable element in its growth and strengthening. Hence they claim our recognition, and all the more, because their tastes and pursuits being "caviare to the general," their lives devoid of startling incident and their characters of eccentricity, they may so easily be passed over.

John Lumley began his career at thirteen as a farm labourer, but gave himself with such ardour to the acquisition of knowledge, that he became a schoolmaster, and ultimately a druggist. Neither mathematics nor pharmacy, however, could wean him from Biblical study. He early laid a good foundation by reading the New Testament through once a month, and set himself to master the points at issue between Calvinism and Arminianism, as part of his equipment for that controversy, committing to memory the whole of the Epistle to the Romans. In 1838, he lost his official position in connection with the Wesleyan Methodists owing to his refusal to pledge himself not to preach for other communities. In 1840, he joined the Primitive Methodists and became a local preacher, school superintendent, and class leader. John Lumley, like Matthew Denton and Thomas Church, must have an early place in the list of Primitive Methodist laymen who ventured into the field of authorship; for, in 1844, he published a work on "The Necessity, Nature, and Design of the Atonement," which received very favourable notice. In 1845, he removed for the second time to the United States, and died there in 1850. His interesting memoir was written by W. Thompson Lumley,
who for the long period of sixty-three years was associated with the Pickering Circuit as one of its most prominent and capable officials, and died as recently as 1897.

The family of Frank has had a long and honourable connection with the Pickering Circuit, dating back to 1833, when Ann, the fair daughter of the house, was converted, and, despite the bitter opposition of her parents and brothers, joined the Church. In the end her firmness and tact overcame all family opposition, and she had the joy of welcoming parents and most of her brothers into the same fellowship. Soon she was pressed to speak in public, but entered on the work with extreme diffidence. Her first effort, however, proved so remarkably successful in its spiritual results, that all scruples were set at rest, and for sixty long years her name stood on the plan as a local preacher. Her tall and slender form, her resonant voice bespeaking intense conviction, and her womanly tact rendered her ministrations very acceptable, and she preached far and wide in the villages round Pickering and Kirby-Moorside. For three or four years after beginning to preach she was accompanied by a young lady-friend, Alice Jane Garvin, who was gifted with an excellent voice and sang the gospel while the other preached it. The two sometimes went on foot, but at other times, we are told, each rode on a smart well-groomed donkey; and the picture thus called up is not at all an unpleasing one. When Ann Frank entered into the marriage state with Mr. Swales her chosen work suffered little interruption. In their home at Pickering cheerful hospitality was dispensed, and the godly pair had the satisfaction of seeing their only son enter the ranks of the ministry in which he has faithfully served upwards of thirty-six years.*

Mrs. Swales died February 4th, 1895.

Our sketch of the past history of Pickering Circuit would be incomplete were it to contain no reference to Messrs. J. Frank, J.P., of Pickering, and W. Allenby, of Helmsley. Both happily survive as veterans, with a record of more than half a century’s faithful service, that has been of untold advantage to the district in which they reside. Mr. Frank is the Circuit Steward, and has been connected with the Pickering Sunday School for fifty years. Mr. Allenby is also a Sunday School Superintendent, and became a local preacher in the early fifties, along with his life-long friend, Rev. Joseph Sheale.

The Wold Circuits: Driffield and Bridlington.

Both Driffield and Bridlington are “in the Wolds.” The two towns were missioned about the same time, and, as heads of branches or circuits, their relations with each other have been close and intimate; indeed, for some years Bridlington was a branch of Driffield Circuit. Hence, as geographically and historically the two go together, they may be fittingly considered under the common designation of “the Wold Circuits.”

*Their daughter, too, it may be noted, is married to the Rev. W. A. Eyre.
By the Wolds we are to understand that well-defined upland tract, which, like a great crescent of chalk-hills, sweeps round from Flamborough Head to the Humber, and is bounded on the east by the low ground of Holderness, on the north by the Vale of Pickering, and on the west by the Vale of York. From time immemorial Driffield, planted at the foot of these oolitic uplands, has been the chief town—the capital of the Wolds. With its clear sparkling trout-streams, its flour mills, its clean, pleasant streets, its air of prosperous comfort, it has yet had a long history. Driffield embalms the name of Deira, a subdivision of the ancient kingdom of Northumbria. Alfred of Northumberland had his castle here, and the Moot Hill is still the name of the eminence on which the folk-mote assembled, and a tablet in Little Driffield Church commemorates Alfred’s death in 705. Busy and thriving as Driffield is, it still clings to some of the old-world customs. Its parish clerk still rings the harvest-bell at five o’clock every morning for twenty-eight days during harvest; for the Wold country is nothing if not agricultural, and Driffield is its emporium.

This interesting district has, from a Primitive Methodist standpoint, been more fortunate than many other parts of the Connexion, in that its story has been well and fully told in a work easily accessible. We chiefly confine ourselves, therefore, to the first missioning of the Wolds and its chief circuit towns, Driffield and Bridlington, referring our readers to Rev. H. Woodcock’s “Primitive Methodism on the Yorkshire Wolds” for fuller details.

When and by whom was Primitive Methodism introduced into Driffield? Perhaps we may not be able to arrive at absolute certainty on these points; but there is