

CHAPEL OPENINGS. – BURLAND CIRCUIT.

“The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad,”

1. NANTWICH.—This is an ancient market town in Cheshire, containing about five or six thousand inhabitants. The Primitive Methodist missionaries first visited this town about the year 1817 or 18, but with very little success. Indeed, our cause and interest in this place continued remarkably low for many years after Burland was made a circuit. The preachers often had to stand in the streets and face the wintry blast, or at best to hold forth the words of eternal truth in a few small insignificant cottages, in different parts of the town. Our society long continued very small, and the members without opulence and influence. Still, however, we continued our efforts “undamped by doubt,” carefully embracing every opportunity to lengthen the cords of our Zion.

In the year 1827, we purchased a building previously intended for two cottages. This we converted into a chapel; and this appeared ample accommodation, compared with what we had before; yet we soon found the chapel was badly situated, and far too small; for when our friends missioned the streets, and invited people to come to the means of grace, they would say, “Why do you invite us? You have no room. We cannot get into the chapel if we come.” Hence we saw and felt the necessity of a larger chapel, and, for years, anxiously employed all our tiny influence to obtain suitable land on which to build a chapel, but without success. But in March, 1840, we, by Divine Providence, succeeded in purchasing some property, consisting of several newly erected cottages nearly complete, and a quantity of land admirably adapted for our purpose. But in consequence of its having been several times sold and mortgaged, the law expenses were rather heavy. These, with the purchase money, amounted to something more than seven hundred pounds.

The chapel is forty-two feet long, by thirty-six feet wide, outside; and twenty-five feet high from the floor to the ceiling. The vestry is sixteen feet by fourteen. The chapel has sixteen windows; a large gallery at one end, with a circular front. It is heated by flues, and lighted with gas. It is substantially built with brick and slate, and is considered an ornament to that part of the town where it stands, and a credit to the society and Connexion to which it belongs. It was opened on Wednesday, Oct. 21, 1840, by Mr. Flesher, from Hull circuit; on Sunday, October 25, by Miss M. C. Buck, from Wrockwardine Wood circuit, and one of our local preachers; and on Sunday, November 1, by Mr. King, from Preston Brook circuit. The collection amounted to fifty pounds two shillings and twopence.

After using the utmost economy, our outlay on these premises has considerably exceeded our first expectation. The following is a statement of the accounts, with our prospect of meeting the annual payments.

	£	s.	d.
First cost of premises	682	10	0
Law bill, including deeds, on the Connexional plan, enrolling in chancery, &c. &c.	24	10	0
Cost of erecting three new houses, and finishing those built before	290	14	0
Total cost of chapel, including boundary walls to premises, palisades, gas fittings, &c. &c.	741	10	0
TOTAL	1739	4	0

Towards which we have obtained by begging, &c	259	4	0
Debt remaining on the Premises	1480	0	0
Interest of £1480, on notes of hand, at 4½ per cent	66	12	0
Estimated average annual expense of chapel and houses, including insurance against fire, &c	8	8	0
<i>Total annual payment</i>	75	0	0
Rent of houses as at present let	65	0	0
Estimated annual income of Chape	45	0	0
<i>Total annual income</i>	110	0	0

From the above statement it will be seen that we calculate on an annual income over our expenditure, by which we can lower the debt from thirty to thirty-five pounds per annum.

We are thankful to the Great Head of the church for so far prospering us; (for since the chapel was opened, our congregation is far more than trebled, and we have added at least sixty members to the society;) and also to our kind and valuable friends, who have aided us in this weighty undertaking. It must be acknowledged that the beginning of our cause in this town was small indeed. But what will be the nature and extent of its future progress are among the purposes of Him who has the hearts of all men in his hand, and has said, “My counsel *shall* stand, and I *will* do all my pleasure.”

2. *Whitchurch*.—This is a market town in Shropshire, containing several thousand inhabitants. It was missioned again and again, both by Burland and Frees circuits, and ultimately given up by both. A few years ago we decided, to give it another trial, and our preachers went and preached in the streets for a considerable time, when a small house was opened for preaching in a principal street, and many came to hear. The house was often crowded, and many that sought admission could not get in. Under these circumstances, the Baptists, (to their praise be it spoken,) who have a large and commodious chapel in the same street, offered us the use of it at any time when they were not using it themselves. In this place we preached several times, when many came to hear, and our cause assuming a more pleasing aspect, we deemed it advisable to get a chapel of our own. And, after combating with many difficulties, we at last obtained a small piece of land in the centre of the town, on which we have erected a chapel thirty feet by twenty-five. It was opened, Dec. 27, 1840, by Mr. T. Wood, a local preacher from Nantwich, and Mr. T. Adams, from Lichfield; and on Sunday, January 3, 1841, by Miss Buck, and another of our local preachers. The collection amounted to near twenty pounds. This chapel, like the walls of Jerusalem, was built in troublous times. Not a few, like the Horonite of old, were ready to say, “What do these feeble Jews?” Hence, in consequence of meeting with much opposition in carrying out our plans, and having no person on the spot with skill and influence to attend to the building, the chapel cost considerably more than it ought to have done. Yet after all our troubles, we hope the chapel will do well, and be a blessing to generations yet unborn; and that in the great day of final settlement, it will be said, “This and that man were born there.”

3. *Leighton Moss*, — Our cause was introduced into this neighbourhood by some of our venerable fathers and founders of the Connexion, long before Burland itself was missioned. And although more than twenty years have rolled their rounds, we have never wanted for an Obededom in the neighbourhood, in whose house the Ark of the Covenant has found a resting-place. However, our friends there thought they wanted a chapel, and set about it in good earnest. A piece of suitable land was purchased, and a chapel twenty-four feet by twenty-two, with a cottage annexed, was built thereon. This chapel was opened on Sunday, June 20,

1841, by Mr. John Graham, from Tunstall; and on Sunday, June 27, by Mr. Jas. Bourne, from Bemersley. The congregations were large, and the collections considered liberal. The chapel and premises are settled on the Connexion. Total cost of premises about one hundred and eighty pounds. Debt now remaining, one hundred pounds. The annual rent of the cottage and garden is three pounds three shillings. The seats in the chapel are all let, and more are wanted. This chapel is already too small, and our friends are about to enlarge it. By this time it may be said, "What hath God wrought?"

4. *Wettenhall*.—In this neighbourhood we have long had a cause, and carried on our worship in a small cottage. There were frequent complaints for want of room; and an opportunity presenting itself, our Wettenhall friends procured a piece of freehold land on which they have erected a small neat chapel. It has four windows, and a number of elevated pews. And it is settled on the Connexion. The title deeds cost three pounds. This chapel was opened on Sunday, July 11, 1841, by one of our local preachers; and on Sunday, July 18, by Mr. Austin, from Leek, our present superintendent preacher. Total cost of this chapel about one hundred and ten pounds. Debt now remaining, sixty pounds. The chapel is likely to do well, and to be a blessing to the society and the neighbourhood.