

REMINISCENCES

BY FREDERICK SMITH

I, Frederick Smith, was converted to God at Bethel Chapel, Sheffield, on Sunday Eve July 13th 1856, not thro' any Minister, but thro' Mr Thomas Carter, then a Private Member, but afterwards he formed class after class chiefly of persons converted thro' his definite prayer and faith for their conversion as he did for me.

I think both preachers and members should have a list of persons to pray for daily by name. I did. My brother Henry and I lodged at the same house, and I began family prayer reading and praying every night – with all in the house. They complimented me “I didn’t think you could pray like that”. I told Henry I wanted to hear him pray for himself. “Nay, I’ll never be a Methody”,
“Yes, you will and sister Susan and Ann and your Lizzie, you four will be converted within a month”,
“How do you know?”,
“I read John 14.13.14. ‘If ye shall ask anything in my name, I WILL DO IT’ and I’ll ask Him.”
“Nay, I’m going to get married in 6 weeks time and then I’ll turn over a new leaf”.
I said “Then you and Lizzie will both be converted a fortnight before your marriage,
“How do you know we shall?”,
“I have told you how I know”.

On the Sunday night before the month was upon the Monday night, I had not the slightest difficulty to get their consent to go with me to hear our Rev. Robert Robinson at Stanley Street in the Wicker, nearly 3 miles away. His text was very fit for the occasion “Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God”. They followed me from the pulpit end of the gallery down to the Communion. When close to it Ann turned and ran not walked out of the Chapel. The three got into the Kingdom of God. My sister Susan went to Ann’s home. Her family said “She is upstairs, you can go to her”. My sister found her kneeling at the bedside praying in an agony. With my sister’s assistance she found peace in Jesus. All of them regularly attended class and in course of years died in the Lord.

At the March Quarterly Meeting of the Manchester Third Circuit held in Old King Street Chapel, Salford, in the year 1857, I had a note to assist at preaching services. A year after this at the March Quarterly Meeting I was unanimously placed on the plan as a fully accredited Local Preacher.

At this same Quarterly Meeting 1860 (and the first I attended) I and Mr Richard Becket were asked to withdraw while they decided which of us two they would invite to become their third Minister of the Circuit. To my great surprise they chose

me so that I became an L.P. and a T.P. on the same day. Mr Becket was greatly annoyed as he had been a L.P. 3 years and quoting Scripture said "He that cometh after me is preferred before me". The Meeting somewhat soothed his feelings by promising him that all being well they would recommend him to the General Missionary Committee in 12 months, which they did, but after serving that Committee as a Minister for 12 months, he retired into private life.

LEAVING MY EMPLOYMENT FOR THE MINISTRY

I left my employment on the Thursday 14th of May and had to prepare two sermons for Sunday. My employers had told my Superintendent, the Rev. Thomas Jobling that he would not have given me up for anything else.

On the first Sunday I had to preach at Mosley Common about 2 miles from Walkden. I fasted and prayed much about it, and told the Lord that I hoped the Quarterly had not made a mistake and that I thought He would be very hard up for men before He would choose me for one of His Ministers. However the Lord spoke most unmistakeably to me saying "I send thee to turn them from the darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may obtain inheritances thro' sanctification, that is by faith that is in me".

I was unspeakably humbled before God. And besought the Lord that He might use me in the turning of the two souls on my first Sunday or I would take it as proof that I was astoundingly mistaken and would go home into private life at 6 o'clock on Monday Morning. By the grace of God William..... aged 17, and Mrs Elizabeth Booth at whose house I dined, were both given me as souls to my hire, and seals to my ministry, and both remained faithful to God and Church membership years and years, until they went to be with Christ which was far better. God kept his bargain then and also by giving me 13 others later in that same year. at the same place. Glory to God only.

A REMARKABLE DINNER.

The husband of the aforesaid Mrs Booth, came to me after service, saying "I go to the Wesleyans but my wife comes here, and she has sent me to fetch you to dinner". "It's very kind of both of you" I said. We were put into the best room where the cloth was already laid for dinner. Presently Mrs Booth who didn't dine with us came in with a "rolly polly" pudding and set it before me. She then fetched another rolly polly pudding and set it before him. Mine turned out to be chopped meat and onions and his apple, so we swapped a bit of each. It was very enjoyable. I sat back thinking I had had my dinner, but I was mistaken. Mrs B came and fetched the remains of our puddings and put a joint of beef in front of me and a joint of mutton before Mr B. I

sat looking at mine with amazement and dismay. I thought I had finished my meal, and I had to preach again at 2.30 and to preach off 2 dinners would be hard work. Mr B seeing that I was dinner struck exclaimed "get some meat mon, what art staring at?" So, as I could not think of grieving their kind hearts, I turned to again and ate to the glory of God. So I think the first Sunday in my ministry was a red letter day, 2 souls and 2 dinners F.S.

MILKING MRS HIGGINBOTTOMS COWS ETC

At the aforesaid Mosley Common I tried in vain many times to get the Society Steward's wife, Mrs Higginbottom to Chapel. One day she said "Bless the man, he's always pestering me to come to Chapel. How can I come with all these jobs to do? Here take this tin and go and milk the beasts". "I will if you will come to Chapel". "Very well I'll come".

I said "Put your apron on me". I was glad to find there were only 3 cows to milk. Presently she came to see how I was getting on. "Ah me man I didn't know you could milk else I would have found you another job". - would it have been washing or baking?

I said "You know you will have to come".

"Oh honour bright, I'll come". And she did, and she was converted to God and dead in Heaven in 6 months. If I had not got out of my rut, would she ever got out of hers?

REFORMS AND SAVES A WOMAN

At the same place years after when I became Superintendent of Walkden Circuit I got a drunkard woman to become a Xtian and a teetotaller.

I also got a lady and gentleman to put trees and shrubs in the Chapel ground which certainly improved its appearance. All these things were worth my doing F.S.

STREETGATE MISSION

I was planned fortnightly to mission St Gate about 2 1/2 miles in the direction of Bolton from our Walkden Chapel. It was otherwise called Chowbent reputed to be the most wicked place within a radius of 20 miles. There was no Nonconformist Chapel there and we had only one or two members near it who could not help to mission it. The Church Minister was quite unfit to help me as sometimes unless he was held he would probably have fallen into the open grave. I used to sing up the Main Street a considerable distance and speak opposite a Public House. It occurred to me that I was not using my wits to my best advantage.

I asked about 40 children to sing Sunday School hymns. Alas! They knew not one as there was no Sunday school. I named some of the best known – did they know that one? And the response each time was a shake of the head, they might have had the palsey as shaking was the only answer I could get. For sheer desperation I asked did they know the Doxology and they all vigorously shook their heads again. I exclaimed “What!” “Not know ‘Praise God from whom all blessings flow?” “Oh Aye” was the answer. I assure you it took a lot of courage to lead that juvenile band all along the high street, hollering that ology for they could holler no other. Arrived at my speaking place the children all left me. I had to sing and preach and pray all myself, it was hard work was all this. The colliers used to emerge from the pub and say all sorts of things to me. I never answered back – but talked with steam up. Sometimes two or three would come up with a foaming quart of ale and swear by God they would make me drink it, and threatened to take my white tie off if I refused. My successors on the Circuit declined to carry this rough missioning on tho’ so much needed. The only Wesleyan I knew in the village sent a note and 2/6 thanking me for my efforts to benefit that neglected place. The Wesleyans took it up and have a good cause Chapel and school there.

“TAKING PEOPLE ALIVE”

After leaving the cottage chapel at Nardley Lane, we built a Chapel nearer to Swinton to seat about 300. Our cottage congregation looked very meagre in it. We gat Mr Fox of Sheffield to preach in it one week night. I prayed and visited and missioned with full assurance that it would be quite full. I tried in vain to get a bell that I might act as Town Crier, and a woman offered to lend me 2 basins-“they would make a bonny ring” she said. I told her they would make a bonny smash, and that I would go and ring my own bell. I did so in Street after Street, but the mill people preferred to go on with their tea. I sent many children to inform the people of a wonderful ‘DO’ at the Chapel tonight it will be packed. At length I resolved to sing in another Street and break down to get them out to laugh and then to listen. Selecting a house with 6 adults enjoying their tea I said to myself “I’ll have that lot out by hook or by crook”. I sang ‘My God, the spring of all my joys etc’ and broke down on the third line, immediately the 6 rushed for the door and roared at me standing in the middle of the Street. The people on either side of tem came out as I expected they would. “The parson has broken down” was the cry all along that Street. In a while I said “here it’s my turn to laugh now”. I said “I could not get you out to hear heavenly things, so I thought I could get you out to laugh”. I spoke from a full warm heart to over 50 people and I never saw a congregation weep more freely. Our Class Leader Mrs Isaac Healy was on her way to Chapel and seeing so many people running thought a cotton mill must be on fire, and excitedly asked “What ever’s to do folk?”. They told the story I have penned. She said “It’s true, he

told me all about it". The Chapel was packed and 3 of the 6 people before the house I broke down, came out for salvation. Worth doing I say. The railway Co. took this Chapel. A fine church and school are standing opposite.

A VERY SINGULAR CONVERSION AT PENDLEBURY. Very near to Wardly Lane and Swinton.

A woman said to herself as she saw me weeping in the pulpit "If that man weeps about my soul, it's time I wept for it myself". I went to see the family. The husband was very insulting. I spoke very pointedly about how he was letting the souls of his children be lost and how they would be in his teeth at the day of judgement. He came to chapel the next Sunday night. Many visibly trembled and wept as well as him. As I was watching him he went down onto the pew floor and on his hands and toes he crept along the pew floor and floor of the aisle to the penitent form. No sooner there everybody saw where he was for he cried aloud "Lord save me etc", and he got saved and joined the church.

On another Sunday evening in the same chapel :- THREE RELATIONS GOT SAVED. Grandson, Father and Granddaughter Cromptons all knelt together at the penitents form and all joined the church for life. The father is an official at our Walkden Chapel now. August 1925, goes down Knowles and Son's coal pit at Pendlebury i.e. Pendlebury 350yds deep. I had refused invites to descend other coal pits but the cages at this one had teeth folded up underneath them so that if the wire rope broke the teeth would instantly fly out and seize the strong wooden rods on each side of the pit and prevent its descent. A very tall and big man, Superintendent of the Sunday School conducted me. As we descended he cried aloud in the greatest alarm. We could not see each other, but I said "What's the matter Simon?"

"We're going like leetning" he said,

"Well don't you always go like 'leetning'?"

He replied "I've been going down 40 years and I never went so before".

"Then why are we going so now?"

"I dunno - unless as he seed you were a Parson he would see if he could frighten you" "Ah" but I said "he has frightened the wrong man".

With a great emphasis he said had the Master see him do it, he would have dismissed him instantly.

About three weeks after the same engine driver pulled the cage up over the pulleys by allowing the engine to give one stroke too many and hurled 9 colliers down the pit and smashed them to bits.

At pit bottom were like so many railway arches holding the roof up, the arches were made into stables for the pit ponies, half the manger was for corn and the other water with a tap to supply it. A glass office with lighted gas supplied by pipes from

above ground, quite an extensive network of railway lines, men working upright and others on their sides and others flat on their stomachs – some walked 3 miles underground to their work. I asked the fireman who conducted us who was a U.F. Methodist and who prayed in the prayer Mg in the office, if he would shew me the gas which blew colliers to pieces.

“Yes” he said “As well as I can”.

We went into a piece which had a cloth (beattish it is called). We had each a colliers locked lamp alight,

“Now I warn you we must go in here without moving, and lift not hat nor hand or it will blow us to bits”.

I said “Please don’t”.

The gas soon burnt blue in our lamps – no one dares work in here, I will get a safe man to cut a hole in each wall and drive the gas up the shaft. A piece of coal cut with a smooth face by the road side was every inch of it as full as possible studded with small white –very white- sea shells and oak and fern leaves. It was lovely, and shewed plainly that sea and woodland had made the coal.

A MOST REMARKABLE INCIDENT AT KING ST. CHAPEL

I was very much exercised in mind that tho’ I had got an old man saved by reading my Sabbath School Bible to him as he watched the fire at the new server that was being cut at Lower Broughton, and got him to attend Chapel now and then, and also got a Dairyman saved in that same St. by similar methods.(he got liberty and peace as we talked about salvation under a street lamp) and got a navvy saved and to attend Chapel (from my tract district) and now and again got a soul saved at a Friday night outdoor meeting and in a Cottage in winter, it was crowded – Mr Beckett and I used to give old Fanny a small sum for making us a good fire. We always took tracts round the Streets before the meeting and held a prayer Meeting after our exhortation. A young woman decline d to stay the prayer meeting at the Chapel – when her hand gripped the handle of her home door she ran back quite a long distance, into the Chapel and flung herself at the communion rail, where she sought the Lord in much penitence and found a clear sense of pardoning mercy. Before the service I had a clear assurance that someone would be saved at that service. But tho’ these blessed results were obtained I felt that the prayers and faith of that Church - or any Church could and should be of such an order as warranted by many exceeding great and precious promises that at least we ought “try all means to save some” every Sunday.

So I persuaded Mr Becket to agree to pray (Matt.18.19 in unwavering faith) all one week that the Communion rail might be filled with penitents next Sunday night. No one was to know that we two had so agreed. We opened the prayer meeting and left

it to conduct itself and we had agreed that no exhortation should be given by us, and no public or private invitation be given to penitents, and that we would hide behind the pulpit where no one should know where we had gone to and pray until which of us believed first that the Communion rail was full of penitents should tell the other. By the grace of God, I believed and told Mr Becket it was full, we quickly made our way to Communion, and before God I declare that it was packed by 17 penitents.

This I call giving our faith something to do. And unless it works it will become too weak to grip any of the working promises, and if all the members of the Church (are like you) is it any wonder there are no conversions. Such church members don't expect any, they expect there won't be any. I saw five souls saved in one of our Hull Chapels

and a man said in his prayer " We have been doing our best all week Lord. You must do the rest". We did our best (Mr B & I) that week and that was praying and believing that God would do his best and He did.

CONVERSION OF A BARON'S DAUGHTER

She was a very high Church lady. Someone induced her to hear a Wesleyan Minister. She was deeply convinced, was in great mental distress many days. Went and told her Minister tho' he had the cure of souls he got neither his or anyone else's cured, poor man. She went to the Wesleyan Minister under whom she had been awakened and to his colleague in vain. By advice she went to see a Wes. Class Leader, a very blessed man who led 30 of his members one week and the remaining 30 the next week. He often sent for me to help persons in his class who in vain sought for peace for many months. Failing to help her he advised her to come to me. After telling me the names of all the people who failed to help her, I said "As those blessed men knew more how to get saved than I did - I didn't think I should say anything to her". She entreated me to do my best for her. I said "If the Lord Jesus was to come into this room and say something on the subject, would you believe Him?"

"Indeed I would"

"I am not so sure that you would".

In great distress she said "Oh how can you say so I believe every word of the Lord Jesus".

"No doubt, dear Lady, you sincerely think you do, but I sincerely believe that you don't". I put my SS Bible before her and asked her to read aloud John 5.24. 'He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life' (please observe) does it read hath or shall- she spelled it h a t h everlasting life. Who has everlasting life?

"He that believeth on me".

"Have you everlasting life?"

"Oh, I wish I had".

"Yes, but if you were believing on Jesus you would not be wishing for everlasting life. You would have it. As soon as you believe Jesus died for you, He will keep his word." i.e. give you everlasting life. Read on please.

"And shall not come into condemnation" (but you feel you are in condemnation) read on who shall not be condemned He that believeth on Me, but IS passed from death into life". Who is passed from Death unto Life. He that believeth on me. Is, Is, Is passed not shall pass. She was on her knees reading all the time. As I iterated hath and is she threw up her hands saying "I see it. I see it" and I said "And what do you see Lady?"

"That Jesus really did die for me".

"Yes and as Jesus said unto Peter 'Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven'. Yes plenty of people say these things to others but only God Himself can demonstrate it- shew it to a soul". She became full of praise to God for a long while and I left her at it. Glory be to God.

A MIRACLE

I visited a woman in Salford, awfully dropsical, several times, quite a stranger to me. She lived with her mother. Neither knew the Lord – so I besought the Lord much to save them. One Sunday afternoon I told the Lord that if he did not save them that day while I was visiting them I should conclude that for some righteous reason He had decided not to. And while praying with them I said that to the Lord.

Immediately I had so said I was much encouraged in spirit, the spirit of prayer and the grace of supplication was poured into me. My spirit rose into the faith of God and I cried aloud "Lord Thou does now" instantly both women cried vigorously aloud for Mercy and Salvation and healing and got healed in both body and soul. The Doctor had secured a bed for the sick one at the Workhouse Hospital to go there and die. He gave back word that if there never had been a miracle before that was one. I am thankful to this day Sept 9/25 for this remarkable answer to prayer. If only every believer in Jesus would become so intimate with Him that they could not and would not doubt Him they would often be led to pray for great things to be done which are left undone. Amen.

WHAT I SAW AND HEARD WHILE IN THE PULPIT

In the gallery a sturdy collector put the box before a big 6 foot man who only nodded at the box, but as the collector could not get the nod into the box, he still held it before him, but heard only thunder and lightening, and not being able to them into the box, he still waited. A vigorous nod was all he gave. The collector stood firm, till

the furious man put a penny in the box. The collector made everybody hear him say "May the Lord have mercy on your skinny soul". One Sunday night after I had preached, he hastened down from the gallery, met me at the foot of the pulpit stairs and in great wrath and uplifted hand said "If you had any fault to find with me, why didn't you come to our house and tell me what you has against me instead of telling everybody". God would not let him hit me as he threatened, as his hand was almost as large as a shoulder of mutton, he might have knocked me into the middle of next week. It seems that God used me to give him a good thrashing, altho' thro the Lord I escaped getting one from the irate man. He turned to the Lord and became a member of the church.

IN KNOWLWOOD CIRCUIT

I preached one week night at Bottoms on 'private prayer' not in word only, but in demonstration and power of the Holy Ghost and 2 young men named Taylor and Sutcliffe were converted. Both of them became local and travelling preachers – the latter a noted preacher.

The Cotton Famine began and raged with woeful results. The Circuit never used to have had 2 ministers at once, and I believe never has had since that year and as it could not afford to pay me enough to buy all my needs they were obliged to make a food plan for me, and I was planned to a meal at one place for breakfast, at another for dinner and a third for tea every day. If I took supper at my lodgings I had to pay 4¹/₂d. The total of my food expense one quarter was £2.7.0. at which the Quarterly Meeting complained, so that I ought to have fasted more or begged more or paid for it out of my own pocket weather I could or not, my salary was £7. 3.0 making my cost to the Quarterly meeting £9.10.0 or £30 per year for board and lodging, washing, collections, Class and Ticket money, fares, charity and £3 for itinerant Preachers, Friendly Society and clothes and books. Stationary and postage, pens and ink and any other needs that might arise. During my 4 years probation I had to borrow £10 of my father. By dint of industry and economy I repaid him and 5% interest, which latter he declined, but I insisted till he accepted it. I did exactly the same thing with Mr Thos Carter. Thro whom I was brought to God.

After the Cotton Famine thro' the American War the Book Room asked the Ministers to sell more books and so benefit the people and themselves. So as they offered them to us at a reduced price we, or I did, sold them at a price considerable below the published price at a small profit to myself, which brought a little legitimate help in time of need.

The Book Room could do this at a profit to itself, because publishers offered them a remnant of an edition of a book because room was wanted for new books.

At my third Quarterly Meeting the March one, the Circuit counted 25 increase of members upon the previous March. My Super said he had not had a convert during the year. I produced the names and addresses in my pocket book of 25 persons converted under my ministry during my 9 months in the Circuit. I had 60 in my first year in Salford and God said to me "I send thee to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God". And He did it.

THE REMOVAL THRO' THE COTTON FAMINE TO CHORLEY

This was a larger Circuit and could support 2 Ministers. I resided at Wigan. Coming along home from an appointment one dark night along the Canal path opposite a coal siding and coal basin, where boats got loaded, something made a loud splash on the side over there. I instantly spoke to myself "There! who's drowning himself now"? I stopped and waited and watched, presently I saw dimly some object in the water coming straight for me. I could not name it, and wondered was it friend or foe. Then I saw a head- was it an attacking dog? I hit it as soon as I could reach it, with the knob of my umbrella, it went under but came up and on again. So I thought it safest to hit it again, under the water it went again, on rising again I drew it to shore wondering what I had killed, but when I saw its long ears I knew I had killed a rabbit or a hare, it turned out to be a rabbit. I knew that a hare pressed by a pursuing dog would take to water and swim but not that a rabbit would, so this rabbit surprised me, and perhaps I surprised him. I stroked off the water from his fur coat, tied him up in a large silk pocket handkerchief and my hostess tied him up in a pudding for us the next day. Now I must protest that this was not poaching, I was not seeking game. I did not go after him, he came to me. Next time I went that way I looked for a reason why he should swim that water, and lo, I discovered that he was making his way to a clover field just over the canal bank. God who moved ravens to feed Elijah the travelling preacher, with bread and flesh may have sent this flesh to this poor travelling Preacher. So I thank him for it whether He sent it or not.

As what is now Wigan, Orrell and Hindley Circuits were in the Chorley Circuit. There was not such a thing as an off night and certainly nothing could delight me equal to my work with its much walking. It was more common than not for me to have converts at the ordinary week night services, especially at Chorley and I don't remember a Sunday there without fruit.

Congregations were good at most places where I was privileged to preach, and at Chorley crowded the Communion, Vestry and pulpit and always conversions. But a disagreement broke out at Chorley between the Circuit Superintendent and Auxiliary School Teachers as to whether they had a vote in Teachers meetings. I had no part in it but it upset most places as the officials at every place who were

members of the Quarterly Meeting were called to meet a deputation or 2 deputations from the Manchester District Committee and one from the General Committee. I did not attend those official meetings as far as I can remember but went on preaching, but it so upset the Circuit that I wrote asking the Conference to send me to some other Circuit, as I abhorred quarrelling and because the converting work which had been flourishing was stopped, the Conference exchanged me with the Rev. James Middleton of Southport Branch. I regret to add that the quarrel caused a split in the Church at Chorley and they built a Free United Methodist Church Chapel – which I have never seen. Nor did I keep up any fellowship with any Seceders.

I went to Southport, London Street Chapel. The other places on this Branch of Preston 1st Circuit were Churchtown, Banks, Hesketh Moss now called Hundred End and Mere Brow and High Park; Churchtown was its head. I regret to say that I found a split had occurred at London Street only a few weeks before. A member of the congregation walking out while the Rev. Joe Graham Superintendent Minister of the parent Circuit at Preston was preaching – they built a Chapel called the Fisherman Chapel in which I have preached. Our Chapel front was two sand hills, the boundary walls had been levelled with the ground, the inside of the Chapel shewed signs of destitution. There was no matting or carpet to be seen, no heating apparatus of any sort, no clock, and no seat in the pulpit. And this together with the smallness of the congregation caused the place to echo so that much of the sermon could not be heard. The Trustees had no money in hand and were too discouraged at the time to make a special effort to raise any. Besides they thought it a serious matter under the circumstances that there was £400 debt on the Chapel at 5% interest.

One Sunday morning everyone who came to worship were astonished to find nice cocoa matting covering the aisles and the communion floor with carpet, who had done, people asked in vain. I said “Have these things dropped down from Heaven think you? At night I let the cat out of the bag in the prayer meeting. I had bought them on Saturday night and got them delivered. I locked the door while I put them down myself and I was hoping that I would be able to beg the money and did so. This helped to lessen the echoing very much. In short time I heartened the Trustees to put in hot water pipes, begged a chair for the pulpit and a clock and asphalted path to the School and the whole aspect was changed and the front yard was asphalted too. Also a wall and iron railings fenced it; and gradually prosperity succeeded our efforts.

Our Churchtown Chapel was a very plain building with backless forms and a harmonium. Being mostly working class people and fishermen accustomed to open air life, they soon felt drowsy especially those of the choir, as the ceiling over them was rather low thro’ raising the orchestra floor. I am delighted to tell to their credit that if any of the Choir felt drowsy during the sermon which sort I never was guilty

of preaching, they would get up one by one until I have seen 6 standing at once and as the feeling ceased they sat down again. I used to say 'thank you for standing up to listen, I appreciate it more than if you sat nodding at all' I said 'tho hearing nothing. I know the cause of your drowsiness is not lack of interest in good things but thro' lack of fresh air so much as you are used to outside'. The various institutions of the Church took on a brighter aspect but we very much needed a revival and a bigger and better Chapel.

A BLESSED REVIVAL

I painfully and prayerfully considered the very great need of this.

One Sunday morning, I spoke with deep feeling "I have for 9 months been pleading with you on our great need and solemn duty to have a revival from Heaven and nowhere else by an in-pouring and an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit according to His Holy Word, but we see no signs of it's presence. By the grace of God I have fasted and prayed much about this during the past week and we are going to have a revival beginning today whether you are willing for it or not. Everyone felt the working of the Holy Spirit and that the revival had begun, the wife of a notoriously bad man was greatly converted to God and became mighty in prayer Meetings and Holy living. I and the Leaders at once decided to hold meetings al the week. I led a Mission band from the edge of the High Park and local preachers led one from the far end of Shellfield Road and met at the Chapel gates. A woman declared that Mr. Smith deserved locking up for turning the neighbourhood upside down, but I missed the honour of the lock up. A considerable number of persons were turned to the Lord.

Efforts to make the Branch a Circuit, Preston Ct Quarterly refused our request to be a Ct. I told them we would become one. According to rule our adjourned Quarterly meeting appealed to the General Committee and sanctioned our sending a delegate to lay our case before the coming conference and it made us into Southport Circuit and sanctioned me as the Superintendent. But up to this time the Preston Circuit had demanded 3 Sundays and 3 weeks of my labours.

I had got tired of going to Saul Street and seeing no fruit, so I devoted Saturday afternoon to pray for souls to my ministry there. And my Master fully assured me of success. Said he "I will give you converts at Preston tomorrow". In the prayer meeting after preaching on Sunday evening no incident occurred for something like 10-15 minutes – then the Society steward came to me at the Communion and said "I think I would close the meeting, Mr. Smith- as there seems nothing going off". "My dear man" I said "there will be some going off very soon. Ten souls will come out voluntarily for salvation". "Oh will there, then go on". I rose from my knees and

told the Meeting what we had said to each other. And asked the 10 to come forward. Five did so. When they were satisfied I said “where are the other five, why did you not come with the other five? I don’t know one of the ten but you are sure to come here as the Lord told me.” They came at once and trusted in Jesus knew he had received them. May I remark here that I don’t remember having sinners saved at any service unless I had got into the faith of God about it in secret prayer. Nor ever having such assurance in vain. Whenever I had this assurance, not seeing any did not cause me to suppose I had failed. I knew I had not failed for God’s promise to me could not fail. I could give quite a number of cases of finding them in a few or many days or months; in years after one of whom wrote me after he had become a minister.

BANKS

This place had a poor old Chapel and a dwindled Society. I advised the Leaders Meeting to request the Quarterly M’g to sanction my holding revival services. To my painful surprise every one in the Leaders M’g opposed it. I emphasised the great needs for having a revival. A local preacher named noted Ministers whose Flaming meetings had made many apparently spurious converts and church became weaker instead of stronger. Yes, I had seen some of the men named make revivals, I never did and never would attempt to get a revival up, but for God’s own glory alone beseech Him and get His Church to beseech Him to send one and a great one down. God is the only revivalist worth the name. And the most influential men spoke and said “But let him (Mr Smith) have his own way” I replied “That’s what I don’t want and I am sure I don’t want you men to have your way, but I should like the Lord to have His way for once”. “Well” said the Society Steward “Let us see what he can do”. I said “I can do nothing, but let us see what the Lord can do”. To God’s glory – be it written – He saved many a dozen souls, and it refilled every department of the Church with earnest workers. And the most influential official already referred to told me 12 months after that he thought it only fair to say that his fears and antipathy to me holding revival services has entirely gone. That they had such abiding results at Banks before that the results were substantial after 12 months.

A plasterer at this place was so terribly convicted of Sin that “The first time he got a near me he would give me a good hiding” but instead he heard me preach again and came out at service to be prayed for, and got saved.

AT MERE BROW

We had just opened a new Chapel on the longest lease Lord Lillford would give, his gamekeepers and the family of one of his Tenant Farmers being among his petitioners for chapel land had much to do with us getting it. As nearly all the

people were agricultural labourers we could not borrow any money on the Chapel – Lord Lillford’s Chief Tennant would lend the sum required on the condition that he be appointed treasurer and it seemed to the trustees that was the only way the money could be got. When I went as the Branch Super I found him holding the office of Treasurer. At his house where I always stayed the night, I audited his book and took it to the Trustees Yearly Meeting. He said “The Trustees owe me £6”. I said “No doubt they would pay whatever they owed him”. But reckoning up his book with great care, I told him that I could not discover that debt. As he contended it was £6 I asked that I might read every item to him and he should try to remember what, if anything, he had forgotten to enter in the book. He protested that he had not omitted anything. The Trustees meeting appointed 2 of them to audit the accounts without finding the £6 debt due to the Treasurer. After I left his house to go to the Meetings at the Chapel, one of the Game keepers, Mr Henry Rigby called to see him to whom he told our talk about the £6. He said “Smith has been here, and says the Trustees of the Chapel don’t owe me £6. But I say they do. He is a black coated little devil – by gum he can pray tho”. A great compliment from a blackguard and a drunkard. He was always the last of the household to go to bed. Then but not till then, would he allow me to retire for the night, and when he could hear all quiet or snoring would he say anything about religion. “Now Smith. If I were to die to neeght, where should I go?”. “Straight to hell Mr Wright”.

“Nay, nay, what does the old priest say?”

“What he cannot prove “, said I.

Tho I was his guest I dare not spare him. We had many vital talks all the years I was in that Circuit. I said to him what I had said to his brother James who tenanted the next farm that he nor his brother John or their sons, that they be sure and not go to Heaven. “Well”, said they “that is strange advice for a parson to give, they ought to want everybody to go to Heaven”. “So we do” I said “but not in your way. You hope good luck may get you in, but as that way is impossible you won’t get in, but if you go in you will soon wish you hadn’t and want to come out again. Look here, there’s the Church, there’s the Wesleyan Chapel and there is our Chapel, and year after year not one of you ever put your head inside any one of them. Why? because religion is all there is in them and religion you don’t want. And religion is all they have in Heaven and it doesn’t suit you, Heaven won’t suit you. You will want to come out for crops and cattle and money and beer etc. Religion won’t suit you and Heaven won’t suit you”. The next Sunday old James went to our Chapel in the afternoon and as people stood chatting in the street, old James said to several “I believe I shall have to be one of them or give over coming”. He did the latter, and it was 7 years since he had been seen in the preaching room before the Chapel was built. His one ambition was “To get a cartload of sovereigns with the sideboards on”. If he did get that, it was all that he did get, and what did it profit him to lose himself.

God used me to two of old Jack's daughters and Bob and Will, two of his sons turned to the Lord. His wife had been a member of our Church years before William became a publican at Mere Brow. I found him there when I entered on my 2nd term on that Circuit. I said to him "Will Wright, God will kill you".

"What for?"

"Because " I said "you ruin more men and women in this District than any other man, thro drink and lust. I pray for you every day and have for 6 months past, and if by any means you get saved in your last days it will be as it were by the skin of your teeth. Good day!" Only a few weeks after, he sent for me, he had come to live with his sister in a house where Cambridge Hall now stands at Southport. He saw me coming up the long grass garden and opened the door. He entered the parlour and knelt at the 1st chair he came to close to the door, and before I could speak one word he began to pray "Oh God, pardon my sins - for they are as black as sute, as black as sute", again and in tears of anguish. It was sometime ere I could get a word to him or to God when I could he poured out his black confessions - I had to pull him up as I was just taking the train for the District Meeting. I said "Suppose, Mr. W that I was in the sea here, and saw you drowning, I should row for you and say, gat into the boat Mr. W. but you ere to keep saying as you are doing. I don't deserve to get into the boat, I deserve to be drowned. Do you know what I should say? All that true eno, but you may talk like that till sink and drown ---- get into the boat and then you may talk as long as you like". I left him and went to my train, my colleague Rev. John Hancock called upon him soon after, whom he requested to write me at District Meeting and tell me that I had scarcely got out of the garden gate, when he got into Jesus Christ the soul's life boat and felt he was saved. His gratitude for so narrow an escape of damnation was strong and till his death three weeks after he was full of love and joy and peace. "is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

GETTING MARRIED

In July 1864 I married Mary Robson the eldest daughter of Rev. Thos. Jobling of Salford - a good man in labours more abundant, he became the Missionary Secretary. He sent us to Chapel (old Hind St) with a carriage and pair of grey horses. We honeymooned at Llandudno. Our house at Southport was in Hall St. Duke St. Southport West End the Wesleyans had built a fine church. A school hall and home for Ministers daughters and a Manse.

On its lawn I saw Rev. John Harvard and his circuit Steward a Ministers son. He remarked "I was just telling Mr. Stead Here comes the P.M. Minister, he has just got married and he will do more good in 12 months then the man who is coming here will do in 5 years.". The Minister who opened this new church said at luncheon

“Thank God that I am not a poor Primitive Methodist Minister” He got amply whipped in the public press for it.

In this house our first child was born. Poor mother she did badly. For many weeks the Dr. seemed beaten. Her mother and self nearly despaired and were weeping and having a very bad half hour. I retired to the next bedroom for over 30 minutes, when the good Lord graciously assured me that she would recover. I went and encouraged to wipe all tears from their eyes and that God had clearly assured me that she would recover which rapidly became a fact and we glorified Him together.

Sometime after my wife's recovery, she and I were down our long garden when our dog, by name Tiny, a nice Skye terrier (whom we had left to mind Tom who was sleeping in the cradle) came running to us in great distress and by whine, tears and significant actions tried to allure us to follow became very earnest in her beseechings to come into the house, till I was convinced that our presence was really required. I followed – she ran before me turned again and again imploring me to come faster. Sure enough baby was crying his best. She was at the cradle first put her feet on the side of it and while accompanied with tender and strong whining she licked his tears away. She was noted for fine deeds. She dug 8 rats out of a hedge bank, killing them with one vigorous shake each. When I was at home she always lay on the mat at the foot of the stairs, but whenever I was from home at night she invariably lay on the mat at Mrs. S's bedroom door until she showed her face in the morning. I was offered £5 for her and then sad to relate, only a fortnight later she was run over and had to be destroyed.

I hatched some ducklings under a hen, with stones the boys killed some, some the cats took a fancy to; I had but 2 left and one of these had a broken leg by stones. It was very lean and so I fastened the limb in a sawn clothes peg and he walked about easily until he was fit to kill – the only duck I ever saw or heard of having a wooden leg.

BUILDS A CHAPEL AT CROSSENS

I had preached out in the open air and in a cottage and got several persons turned to the Lord and MR. George Pennel who had given us some buildings in Liverpool to preach in wanted a chapel at Crossens and consulted a joiner, who became Architect and builder of it in Tulketh St. who produced a plan as it is now. He provided no purlins, but instead crossed the rafters which are now covered.

I and Mr Willey a trustee protested strongly even to Manchester Building Committee, and I blame them strongly for passing such plans which failed in the roof woodwork and in all the brick work as well. Mr Willey wanted Mr Wm. Vaugh to build it, all the chapels he built foe including Marshside are well built. Mr Pennel

gave £70 and a second hand silver trowel towards it – thro these unhappy circumstances the Society has never prospered. And I utterly deny any personal responsibility for it. I left Southport at the end of 3 years.

I was sent by District Meeting to Ramsey I.O.M. There Pollie and Fred were born.

Not much good could be done in Ramsey as the Officials lacked Unity. I got up a Silver Free effort and raised £60 towards a new Chapel, my successor who shall be nameless misused it on painting the old Chapel, for this misappropriation of the money raised towards a new chapel, for 20 years the public refused to subscribe any more towards a new chapel. I am delighted to record the existence of anew chapel and school there.

At Kirk Michael, I found a Chapel which was built up to the window sills and remained so 4 years. The builders of the different parts of the scheme “fell out” among themselves. I got the trustees to send them an ultimatum to restart by a certain date or the building would be finished by another building firm. They started the works and required another ultimatum in a few weeks, they were told that another building firm were ready to begin work and that self respect to say nothing more compelled us to say that we could stand no more nonsense, they recommenced work and finished it as it is today. We put in hot water apparatus the only County Chapel with any heating at all in the island at the time. We had a new organ built for it at Liverpool. A very fine revival very soon broke out. The lat year 1924 a revival occurred the first at all comparable to the one already referred to. After Kirk Michael we built a Chapel at Corna Principally thro Mr.

RE-OPENING OF REGABY GATE CHAPEL

The cause had died out and the Chapel disused for years. There was only cottage preaching in the district. The Quarterly Meeting agreed to my proposal to re-open the Chapel. I did so by holding a week’s services. A full congregation every evening, but none save the 3 men I took with me from Ramsey would stay to the after meeting. One night I asked my 3 helpers to sing on until I returned. I was going out to see what the congregation were doing outside, there was rather a long walk thro a grass plot up to the road. I found the walk full, lined up on each side. By the aid of the Chapel lights I saw who they were as I went up one row of them and down the other. I took my stand and said “Charlie Corkill and all of you hear me. By the Ramsey River some sheep ought to have gone over the bridge, but as one leapt up onto the bridge wall, and saw the water he tried to go back, but could not, over into the river he had to go. Al the others thoughtlessly followed, the jumped onto the wall and had to go into the river. C.C. you are leading these young men in the way to hell, where you go, they go, what you do, they do. If you lead them into hell, there

they will torment you day and night for it. But if you will turn and lead them to Heaven instead, they will bless you for ever for leasing them to Him. If you will decide to lead them right go down to the Chapel penitent form and they will follow you.” He did and they, 6 of them followed him. Charlie and 3 of the others became local preachers, numbers of others were saved, the Society was reformed and has kept the flag flying and the work of God prospering for over half a century. Ministers and Local Preachers are wanted to rebuild other waste places of Methodism.

I was strongly urged to stay a 4th year in the circuit, only 1 official present whom I had amusingly offended being against it.

The District Meeting stationed us to Buckley a branch of Chester Circuit, Rev. Jas Macpherson from the Manchester District Committee intercepted my wife and family at Chester told she must not go as the M.C. wanted me for a Circuit in Lancashire where the Minister had suddenly died. She wired me in London asking direction and that our goods had gone to B. I wired follow the goods. I had 12 places to work, but I loved as much work as could possibly get thro. We had a lovely revival at Alltamy. At Buckley I bought the land on which the Tabernacle now stands. I went to see the owner and asked him and his wife to give it to the Lord. “Now, Mr Smith, I have not been keeping it till it would fetch a good price, to give it away”.

I said “If it were mine I would give it to the Lord in a minute, I should only be giving Him his own. ‘for the earth is the Lords and the fullness thereof’ says the Bible, But if I could I would give it to the Lord of the whole earth and build a church upon it with materials that if it were possible would last till the day of Judgement. And as the Angels see every sinner when he or she repents and set the other angels in Heaven rejoicing over one sinner that repenteth. He would very often come to me in Heaven and say “Smith, there’s another, or so many sinners repented in your Buckley Church” I should often have twice as much Heaven in Heaven as other people who had done nothing particular to get souls saved and to Heaven. But perhaps you have never asked the Lord what you should do with His land. Let us ask Him now” We all arose from our knees full of tears for we had a good time with the Lord at the throne of Grace. He said “My dear what do you say to letting them have it at half price”, She agreed. Praise the Lord I say.

STORY OF KIRK

I preached the S School sermons in a field. The Church Clergyman on the other side of the hedge heard my Sermon. On Monday I visited the houses in rotation. I met with a blind man in a one roomed thatched cottage. He said “What do you think of yesterday’s vanity fair. Do you think God would have sent that heavy thunder

shower on it if He had been pleased. You said some think about sheep and goats, I said to myself all here are goats but me. You could tell who was there. Don't I know all the village and all the village was there."

I replied "God had a lot of his good people there and He is highly offended at your insult to them, and He will plentifully reward you for it. I'll be going".

"But you will pray before you go won't you?"

"Why pray with the only good man in the village. More likely to go and pray with the wicked goats".

"You had better pray".

"If I do I shall ask God to break your heart." I knelt and prayed.

A short time after I called on him, he said "The night after you left me I dreamed I was drowning in the sea (it was at the bottom of his road) I was plunging about to get out and woke up sweating awful. I knelt and prayed by the bed a long while. I promised God I would never speak evil again of his people and He forgave me. I go and exhort and warm in every house", this he continued to do as long as his health permitted, years and years.

At Kinerton the Society had dwindled to 3. A widower, Old Robert, the class leader, 2 widows, one of them the Chapel keeper. It is about 3 miles from Buckley. I used to walk there and back without a bite or sup. I said "Robert, how long is it since you had any converts her". Astonished at such an unusual question with emphasis he said "WHAT!" "How long since you had any converts here". "Aye dear. Why 11 years since."

"Really!"

"If you don't like believe me, go across the road and ask old Samuel Johnson. New Connexions; same at their place. They are New Connexions, they need some."

"And are you P.Ms?"

"Aye so ye think we're heathens!"

"No, nor P.Ms either!" "Do you pray for conversion"

"We do of course we do"

"Well must be queer prayers for God to take no notice of them for 11 years. God would have saved them if they had been willing"

I said. "Yes I should think He would".

"I see, I see."

"What do you see?"

"Oh I can see something, I tell you what preacher you're a queer 'un."

"Yes I know I am, but I am seeing there are other queer people in the world as well as me."

"I must try to have a weeks revival services with you. Well, yes I think so"

"Ah, but you must recollect they are as bad as Sodom and Gomorah"

"Yes," I said "I can see something and He burned them up to cinders".

"But do you mean to say that if you come down here for a week, some sinners will be saved?"

"I do say so"

"Then we'll have you by hook or by crook"

"It is God you want down here. But you have asked him to save sinners here. You have told Him that He could not because they weren't willing." Again when you asked him to convert bad people, you said "But Lord, you cannot they are as bad as Sodom and Gomorah and you had to send fire upon them and burned them up. Lord save sinners, but you can't do it"

"I tell you you're a queer 'un"

"No doubt I am".

Before long I got 3 L Preachers to mission and preach on the Sunday. A good day, saw no converts. I took them with me every night that week. Only I preached. Monday night we had 3 out for salvation. I had never been asked to bite nor sup in the village before, after prayer M'g tonight I was asked to go and eat 6 suppers. I said I couldn't eat 6 suppers, I was not used to eating 6 at once. We sat 4 of them that night and every night we "each had supper like a dinner" as the poor boy said. Ham and eggs, Rabbit pie, and one night actually beef steaks. 3 souls saved that Monday night. Souls and suppers were the order every night. 30 were brought to God and joined us and several others who were saved joined their own body New Connexion. One of the old widows who seemed poor eno was so thankful and delighted with the revival that straightaway she paid the remaining £20 debt off chapel.

Note: As soon as there was more grace there was more grub. As soon as there was more grace there was much gold. We made 2 classes and took courage. I said to old Robert "Now you can see God and save sinners if you give over telling Him he cannot but believe he will". Poor old R. how wept for joy.

A local Preacher came a farming from Shrewsbury and we gave him a class of the new converts. Would God that we had more people fit to be their brothers' keeper.

SANDYCROFT

Here I found an ex travelling preacher. Mr. Carter, same name as the man who prayed me to God, and his wife, He died early in my time – a very devout man. I found a Society of only 8 members. I set about getting people converted "and God clothed himself with Gideon". I hunted for souls in every house – Public Houses too. We got a Landlady's son saved – when I went down to the Bar Window. She sang out at me "Nay we are not so bad as all that ye need to come to see us" I said "My dear soul. I have not come to tell you how bad you are, but as a lot of your neighbours are setting out for Heaven I thought I would come and invite you to go

with them". She got saved. She and her son gave up the Beer House and went and worked a milk round in Liverpool. Over 40 others got saved.

Mr. Reid the Class Leader said "What have you been doing at Mr. Manley. He says 'I hate that Smith' ".

"Oh I thought everybody liked Mr. S"

"Well I don't".

"But why?"

"Because he is not content with preaching in the pulpit, but he must come round in the Prayer Meeting and lay his hand on my shoulder and talk to me and I don't like it". I said "Give me your hand, Mr. Reid. In this pitch darkness none but God can see us. I believe I am planned here all next Sunday let's have him converted, pledge ourselves to pray without a doubt for his salvation. Don't wonder whether I am faithfully doing this. I will believe that you are doing it".

He was a very regular attender at both Sunday Services and as he was absent after morning service I said "Where's Manley?"

"Oh, I believe the Devil sent him out of the way to Liverpool last Friday"

"I don't care" I said "who sent him. God will bring him back". "How's your faith, sometimes up and down?"

"Mind them dawns, no need of them, God is not so. God will save him this night"

God kept my faith firm so Mr. M. was not at evening service, but while singing the Hymn, just before the sermon he walked Manley to his usual seat, sweating like July tho 18 inches of snow was on the ground.

I continued in absolute faith and saw that God was meeting him. The sermon was baptised in the Holy Ghost and His fire. M wept sore. As soon as the Meeting commenced, I gave an invitation to penitents form.

Mrs. Carter's servant, whom I had besought the Lord for at her mistress's request came out. I went and put my hand on Manley's shoulder, who I saw was very broken down. I said "Come with me Manley". He came instantly. And God set his soul at liberty. At close of the M'g I said to him "I'm going for a bit of supper at Mrs Carter's before walking home, will you come in a minute?"

"Yes, when I've been home. I've been away since Friday". (He was a widower and left the other children with his 13 year old daughter). After a while he came.

"Where been to Mr M?"

"I went to L'pool last Friday".

"Why been there, not a health resort?"

"I went because I felt that miserable about my soul that I could not work".

"Well, did L'pool do your soul any good?"

"No, I went more miserable all the while".

“Why did you stay so late on Sundays?”

“Trying to shake it off but could not. Resolved I would get to Chapel as soon as I could”.

Yes, God lived at Liverpool . Our prayer was heard there. He came a mile across the River to Birkenhead, B to Chester, 15 miles. Train to Queen’s Ferry 7 miles. Queen’s Ferry 1 ½ walking in very deep snow. Overcoat, umbrella and silk hat his face sweating red as fire. He remained a faithful member for years till his death. Why not more church members agree in twos in work like or similar to this?

I stayed only a year although I had bought land for the New Chapel at Buckley. Had 3 precious revivals and reported O increase. Largest in the District to the District M’g and Conference. I was iniquitously sold by the District Meeting at I. O. Man to a rich delegate from a Lancashire circuit. I knew not an iota about it for 3 days after, nor did the Buckley station. It strenuously tried to get up an appeal to Conference. I shewed it was useless and might be more disastrous to the Station. As the same men who had tried to prevent me coming there had avenged them selves and would be at Conference to carry it thro themselves and leave them to have any unsuitable man left without a job.

A NARROW ESCAPE FROM DEATH

Going to Sandycroft one Sunday morning I entered a field of footpath, a long distance off I saw a considerable number of young cattle. On approaching them I observed a young bull looking steadfastly at me and vigorously shaking his horned head. Seeing he was in a bad temper I turned away to give him a wide berth. He began to scrape the earth and roar. I turned and walked back very fast the way I had come. He walked fast and then began to run after me. I ran for dear life, loaded with overcoat on, silk hat and umbrella. He kept gaining on me, I could hear. I am sure God helped me in that desperate and dangerous struggle. I got over the stile and into the lane with the bull less than 10 yards behind. I was drenched with sweat. My collar and necktie and hair were sopping wet. He put his horns into the hedge and roared thundering roars as he shook the hedge with great violence. I had to explain my condition to the congregation. Ebenezer.

HELMSHORE CIRCUIT

I have already written how I was scandalously smuggled out of Buckley Branch to this Circuit and say no more about it. To epitomise I must about our work here. I won’t say I was handicapped “cribbed and cabined” but in spite of that the dear Lord gave me souls at every place and things “prospered were spiritually moved and souls saved more than for a decade”.

I started the first move and collection for building the Chapel and School at Cragshaw Booth. Also without many weeks notice, thro' the Co-operative Society buying our room over our head suddenly I had to build a Chapel, and start the building fund for we had not begun a fund. I urged all I could to lease, nay buy, double the land we took, but 2 or 3 Mr Fearlings swayed the rest. They have rued ever since as a Cotton Mill soon swallowed it up. A nameless Minister sneered at me (in my absence) that I had provided a drain to the street sewer. He would have been clever to have done it before the sewer was there. We spent £600 and raised over half of it and let me tell that man who said much was not raised that much was raised considering we were a very few and feeble folk. No man toiled harder to raise money. We had not the people nor a building to raise money. Why didn't he beg? His Father gave very well. I will not put down in black and white other reasons why more was not raised. It would take too long to shew how wonderfully what was raised. Many a good story. I will shorten two.

I asked a distant gent a former Oldham Scholar of ours to lay a stone and give £25. Wanted 4. "If you will come and stay all night Mr Smith, I will lay one and give £50." "I'm staying all night " I said. He did it.

A Dyer dodged not to meet me about a subscription. I dodged him at last and got £5, tho he protested much that he would not give me a 1d. He tried to get me off with £1. I thanked him for it and said I should want another £4 before I went. "Then you won't get it".

"Oh yes I shall" I said. God held him and as he gave me the £4 he said "but I never thought you would get it". I said "Sir, because I have prayed about it". I went ten times before I could draw a long promised £10. Five times for a £5, and 7 times and could never draw a £10 promised. But only God knows the struggle, having to see about land by going many miles to see the owner about it. God won't forget my work and labour of love and faith for him, done with an utterly single eye. The Quarterly M'g of that Circuit adjourned 3 times to press me to stay for a 4th year. I liked the people, but here were onerous and distasteful conditions, so that I politely but firmly declined. A dear old man at Hareholm gave my boy Tom an "everyday" laying hen. He was proud of it indeed.

ACCRINGTON & FOXHILL BANK CIRCUIT

I will not say a word about the house. The Circuit was in a low condition. The Rev. James Compton was there one year. They let him leave without paying £8 odd for furniture. The 1st thing I did was to buy a 1d memorandum book, collected the money and sent it to him. It was not his fault – and whose it was I will not state. The Lord knows and so do I, but let it not matter, but let it rot if it can.

At all places except 2 we used to get sinners saved and do any good things wanted – but etc.

A MONEY CLUB

We at Accrington consented to the Trustees joining a money Club £100 shares. We bought 4. Had to pay so much per month – and the money every month was sold to share holders. It ran 9 years and we made £40 odd profit and paid £400 off the debt of Chapel. Some times Treasurer was short of money. I and Mrs. Smith got up a Free in 3 weeks, raised £14 and relieved the situation. I bought various things to sell. Things offered by auction etc.

144 dozen Leibigs extract of beef, drapery, carte de visit frames etc. etc. At Clitheroe I and Abram Roberts Society Steward, begged and by one means and another got the £400 debit off the Chapel.

A SUDDEN DEATH AT ACCRINGTON

I arranged exchange pulpit with Wesleyan Minister Rev. Bunting, a grand man. He died suddenly instead. Preached in the fine Abbey St. Church on Ps 23. “Lord is my Shepherd.” Gentleman took me a long way to dinner. He said he would like to give me a sovereign if I would not be offended. “I said, try me”. I took it in very good humour. At dinner I begged him to open our Clitheroe Bazaar. I must excuse him, he couldn’t do such things. His sweet wife said “You can do it very well.”

“How do you know” he gently said

“Well” she said “if I don’t know, no one else does.”

“No Mr. Smith” you must please excuse me, but I will give you £5 towards it”. I let him off at that! I preached to a Physician the same time, same text.

A GOOSE STORY

Soon after was Xmas week and I went to Rufford Park for evergreens to deck the Accrington Chapel and School. In the park was a member of our Mere Brow society and a Wesley Local Preacher. One of them asked “Where is your Xmas goose coming from, Mr. Smith”.

The other man remarked “Oh his Master has only promised that his bread and water shall be sure.”

“Indeed” I said “My Master says He will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly and that includes a goose.” On Xmas Eve a boy knocked at our door and as Saturday night is a busy one bathing the children I opened the door, he had brought a 14lb goose.

“Who has sent it?”

“Not to tell you Sir!”

“Sure you brought it to the right place?”

"Mr. Smiths I was to bring it to"

"Who told you?"

"Not to tell you Sir"

Now some days later after I found that the Physician had sent it. I think as God listened in the Park to that conversation, He said to Himself, "I'll let you see whether he shall have a goose or not". Well big as it was we "wrestled with it" and heartily said "Bless the Lord O my Soul and forget not all His benefits".

A VERYAMMUSING STORY

I was helping the Union St. Wesleyans Mission the Sts before the service in the chapel. But there were only 3 of us, their 3rd Minister, a Black Missionary and myself. We sang in Whalley Rd "Hold the Fort for I am coming" etc. When we sang "See the mighty host advancing, Satan leading on" because the Black Minister was head and shoulders above us 2 in the middle. We thought the people would think we had got the irritable old Satan with us - We exploded into laughter and ceased to Mission the Streets.

A STRANGE COINCIDENCE.

One day walking along Whalley Road - a very fine Tandem came along. Horses big, bay and extra fine. Handsome gig on very fine wheels. Driver a smart gent, sitting loftily. I spoke to myself "He would look well if one of those large wheels came off," Singular to relate it was no sooner said than done. Off came a wheel and pitched the driver onto the footpath. Horses and trap dragging on axle furiously up St.

Preaching near on Sunday I called at Accrington revival Services. Our Blackburn Minister "White" and a Baptist Minister had a night each, got me for Thursday night. Not a soul saved till Thursday, we had 9. "The excellency of the power is of God."

TO CHESTER FIRST CIRCUIT

I had the invitation to both Chester Circuit in my pocket at the same time. Accepted 11 Ct sad sicknesses. (not relate them) Thro Mrs Smith a Bazaar held and got the debt £400 off George St. Got a few souls saved at some places often at Saughhall, the causes why not more at others shall not be told. At the united Circuits Camp Mg. There was such great preaching before my turn came that when it was my turn a tall man kept saying pitifully of me before I began "Poor lad poor lad" But he hadn't been talking long before I found he were a "mon". He told me this at Uncle Hallmarks.

I called at 10pm at Mr. Bells the Butcher and found him very drunk. He agreed to sign the T.T. pledge tomorrow. I said "To-night!" I ran up the St. and away to St.

Anns St. got a pledge form from Mr. Berrisford Adams, got it signed, none but those i.e. his family and myself could read it. It looked as it had been signed by a hen's claw. I was planned at Whitby several miles out close To Ellesmere Port on the coming Sunday and he offered and I accepted driving me. We had much good talk on the way and was deeply penitent. He promised me that he would go out to the penitent form at George St. Chapel that night. He did and Prayer Meeting was mightily moved. And ever after for years till his death he could not refrain from public praying. A former minister of the Circuit said "Mr. Smith, if you had done not other good it was well worth you coming to Chester." A very big young woman Miss Bocock, housekeeper years after said to me "I shall never forget, Mr. Smith, that night at Willaston there were 9 persons converted that night and I was one of the 9."

SOUTHPORT SECOND TIME

I declined its invitation and accepted Leigh (Lanc). At the District Meeting held at Leigh, Rev. John Hancock the removing Super a former colleague of mine at Southport said "You don't know what you are doing bringing Mrs. S. here with her Rheumatism, awfully flooded district and my cellar is full of water and everything's afloat.

I went to the Southport delegate Mr. Thos Hunt. "Have you got a minister yet Mr. H?" "I haven't." "Then I'm your man if you are agreeable," "Agreeable, I am that". We laid the facts before the District Meeting and I was put down for Southport.

I had not been long on this my Second Term when I informed the Sunday evening prayer meeting at London Street that by examining the books I had discovered that it was not a converting Church but that the new members were imported from other Circuits, so that our gains were made up of the losses of other Circuits.

But of course some people must get saved here without the preachers or the Church knowing it and not joining the Church. I am of the opinion that such cases are the exception. My own experience is that I never got a soul brought to God without first knowing I was going to have one, and in every case when I was going to have several at one service or at a series of services, and I don't remember a single instance not having a No. from 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 19, 30, 100 without seeing them or more. I could tell of a goodly number of cases of one and two that I was sure of but saw or found not till days, weeks, months and one case o2 till 10 years after - 1 of them is living now as I write this, Sep.21/25. Missionary Wm Carey preached a great sermon the first division was "expect great things from God". Secondly "Attempt great things for God." I am appointed to preach in this Chapel at 10.30 and 6. And I suggest that we ask and expect the author of the promises to give us 5 converts next Sunday evening. Faithfully live and pray and expect that from God.

Next e.g. God be thanked He gave us 5. If Churches sought to be led of the "Holy Spirit" they would live, pray for, expect and reap souls all the year round. But the condition of things make it apparent that individually and collectively by too many don't give their hearts, lives or their prayers or faith anything like the saving of souls to do, it is wicked to so live. And we throw the blame on to the world, the flesh and the Devil or even the Church. Let us blame ourselves, and get the Pentecostal power promised. "Act. 1. 8" and "John 14.13.14." 'Whatsoever or if ye shall ask anything in My name I WILL DO IT.'

Rev. Russell Maltby President Elect Wes. Conference, "My conviction is that the Xtian Church cannot capture this or any other Country whilst it remains at its present level of experience."

It would not have been proselytising but for several reasons INJUDICIOUS 8 young women belonging to Mornington Wesleyan Church asked me to receive them into London Street Society because they did not feel at home. I said was it not their duty to do their best to make others feel at home it was the best help to feeling at home themselves. The Wes. Can do you as much good as we, try a bit longer. I said reckoned a bad sign when a patient wanted to change beds. They didn't apply again. It would have made the Wesleyans our enemies and some of them were good friends. I have got one of them saved thro preaching on the Promenade became a very fine L Preacher and liked to give the cause or me a pound or two at times he sent for me. Also an official of Church of Christ heard me preach. Gave me a Sov. Another used to like my preaching told Mr. Pennel he would like to give me a sov if I wouldn't be offended. "You try him." I got it. Dr. Wood also gave me 2 doz Blankets for the country people. I gave him the names and addresses and could not give more than one each, they had not even one before. He very kindly gave me a dozen more.

MARSHSIDE NEW CHAPEL STONE LAYING

The Chapel was built well by Old Wm. Vaughn. The Rev Maylott of L'pool gave addresses. The Quaker Mayor of Southport laid a corner stone, and gave only £3.3. Our Dr. Goodman laid the other corner stone and gave £20. Also 8 basement stones - that is stones about 18in deep, about 6in thick and mostly a yard long were laid (by relays) each 3 times by working men's wives at £20 each time, i.e. £60 each stone, one of the smallest was relaid a 4th time by old John Taylor of High Street our Society a poor man but a Happy Christian who gave £2. We raised over £500 that day.

We had been holding Tea Parties in the Old Chapel for the New. The crush was awful every inch packed and impassable. We tried a charge of 2/6 instead of 1/- No relief then 5/- no relief, Then 7/6 no relief, then 10/- That relieved the worst of the crush. At each of these Teas we had to go out for more provisions.

REVIVAL IN CHURCHTOWN NEW CHAPEL

I got Mr. Jabey Wooley of Garforth and Mr. Joshua Dawson, father in law of Rev. Thos. Cook to come and help me hold a mission – they were Wesleyans and went about holding Missions for them and others. Board and lodging was all they cost us and they did good work and I am lastingly grateful to them. After their week I carried them on alone and many accepted Christ, 10 big men one night. But strange to relate, we did not capture those who had been hearers only for many years, nor the choir.

The winter after, I asked the Sunday Evening Service to covenant with me to pray and believe for the conversion of the choir as only one of them professed to be saved. I said we were in their debt for leading our singing some of them for years in the old Chapel, but that it was hardly good eno for the unconverted to lead the singing of the saved. For people on the way to Hell to lead the songs of those on the way to Heaven. People to lead the praises of God who didn't praise him a bit, and who unless we got them converted would never sing in Heaven. The Meeting took it to heart and covenant prayer was made day and night for their salvation and we were made extremely thankful and happy that everyone of the Choir oldest and youngest were save and joined the Church.

We cannot over estimate the importance of having the conversion of sinners as a very definite and certain objective before the Church and to emphasise this and expect conversions. One winter I begged the members in the Sunday evening prayer M'g to have compassion upon the people who for years in the old Chapel and years in the New had been proof against all the means that God and the Church had used. Hundreds of sermons and hundreds and hundreds of prayers and proof against all the special revival services, praying parents, praying Sunday School teachers, till some thought they were gospel hardened, that it was time to give over bothering about them, and spend your strength and time and prayers on the Young and leave the parents and grand parents to perish.

Were they not worth saving. Was anything too hard for the Lord. Was it right to ask the Lord to save them and then to tell Him He couldn't . Was such unbelief becoming or scriptural. Were not the promises big eno and yea and Amen.

Have we no tears left for these, no pity. Can we leave them to the consequences. Can nothing be done. Shall we not launch the boat once more for those who are ready to perish. Shall not once more throw out the life line. Will you join me in prayer for them day and night. If you will please stand up and lift up your right hand. We did so, and in every few weeks, God arrested, awakened and saved every one of them. One man nicknamed "Bold" had years before joined others in that

village in pelting Rev. Thos Jobling with sods because he reproved them while gambling on a Sunday morning, 3 of them one night about 70years old. Some of the Church of Englanders got saved also and some continued to go to Church and also to Chapel.