

CHAPTER V.

The Making of the Circuit.

LIKE the building of a living body, the making of a Circuit is a continuous work, and in every generation its life depends upon the rebuilding that is carried on. Perpetually renewing its youth, a Circuit will sometimes need drastic surgical operations, and thorough overhauling. Each age must therefore do its own work, and, to change the figure, architecture must be studied. Again, the life bodied forth will have its periods of growth, but will arrive at maturity. By the performance of much labour this has been done, and Brinkworth Circuit possesses abundant vigor.

The Forms of life manifested have been in Evangelism, Liberality, Education, and of these some account will now be given.

1. EVANGELISM.

The possession of the Evangelistic Spirit and Labor is vital to the Church of Christ everywhere, and its absence from a Primitive Methodist Church is a freak. "Except ye become as a little child, ye cannot enter the kingdom of God;" and Evangelistic labor is centred upon effecting the new birth. In whatever form Evangelism manifests itself, it has for its constant spur, the word of the Master, "Ye must be born again." The Brinkworth Circuit is and ever has been Evangelistic to the core. The great missionary operations described in the preceding chapter are proof of this in reference to the past, and the maintenance of its numbers and force in spite of declining populations, is witness to the same in reference to the later years. The burden of its preaching has always been, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish," and its brotherly cry of "Turn to the Lord and seek salvation" has rung out passionately in pleading offer of the Joy of the Lord. The journals of its earlier missionaries were, to a considerable extent, the records of conversions; of the joy felt when these were frequent, and sorrow at their absence. The old battle cry of the Primitives "Hark the gospel news is sounding" has been at once a challenge to the powers of darkness, and an exultant offer to the sinner. Its Camp Meetings were Rallies of the Evangelistic Forces; its Prayer Meetings, held in the open air sometimes, most often in cottages, were times for the Renewal

of the Evangelistic Fires, and in addition, like the Class Meetings and Public Prayer Meetings, applied the match to the fuel of conviction that blazed into penitence and faith, and the joy of acceptance, in thousands of cases.

Thus it has come to pass that Revivals have marked the history of the Circuit from the beginning, and the latest is still in progress. We have heard lately of a man who objected to his son being converted under a fortnight; he, like the one who is reported to have spoken to Hugh Bourne thus, evidently desired his son to be in "pickle." But every Primitive Methodist knows that the sinner is always in "a pickle," and the sooner he REVIVALS. is out of it the better. At Brinkworth at the first, it was said, as conversions were reported, that "it will save his neck if it doesn't save his soul;" drunkards and gamblers and thieves were converted in those days, and the same outstanding witnesses to God's saving power have been seen again and again in the most recent times. Still better, perhaps, large numbers of young men and women, trained in our Sunday Schools, have decided for Christ. The Pen would fain run on for ever in recording these things, but one or two accounts from the past must suffice.

1832 witnessed a general Revival in the Circuit. At Hook Mr. Turner conducted a remarkable Love-

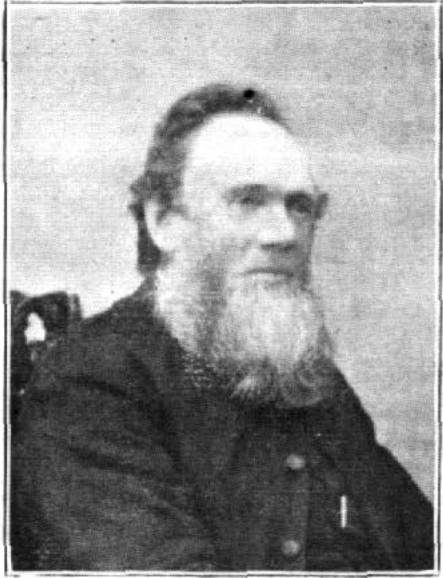
feast. The service lasted until twelve o'clock, and at the close it was found that twenty people had professed conversion. Many societies shared in this gracious result, a spirit of liberality was manifested, Miss Ferris and others were converted at Wootton Bassett (of which more hereafter), and at the Bishopstone Down Camp Meeting, fifty conversions took place. This was a preliminary to the Bristol Mission.

On Sunday, August 6th, 1837, Mr. Maylard preached at Elcombe and administered the Sacrament in the morning. In the afternoon there was a Love-feast, when a powerful influence rested on the Meeting; shouts, and cries, tears and smiles, were mingled together. A gay young woman, standing in one corner of the room, imagined that Satan had got hold of her, and she cried loudly for deliverance. After long wrestling she obtained peace. She was so overjoyed that she ran out of the meeting shouting "glory," and across the fields for two miles to her home, to tell what God had done for her soul. A great revival followed in which nearly every family in the neighbourhood was blessed. Estcott, Blunsdon, Highworth, Wootton Bassett, Stratton, Seagry, and Purton Stoke, etc., shared in the blessing of this Revival period. The Tetbury and Cirencester Missions resulted, and apart from these, from March 1838, to March 1839, there was an increase of about 200 members,

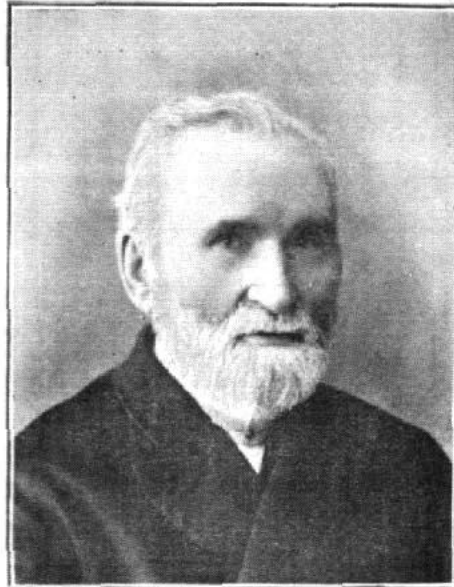
1838-9 witnessed a great Revival at Brinkworth. Large congregations on Sunday, but life and zeal not so much as could be desired, and Sunday School teachers lacking. Mr. and Mrs. Preston have much sorrow for souls, and the former was tempted "to give up travelling," from which calamity his wife's faith saved him.

After six weeks of distress, "the cloud burst, three souls got converted at Brinkworth, and now we have such a work as was never before known in that place. We have had thirty-eight increase. Praise God. And the village is all on a move."

A The work spread far and near. Mr. CLOUD-BURST Preston tells us that this glorious work AT was in answer to prayer, some details BRINKWORTH. of which shall be recorded. "On Sunday, Jan. 20th, several of the members agreed to attend all the prayer meetings (five) that week, and to pray for twenty souls to be converted. Three were converted that day, and then Bro. J. Matthews got up and told the people what they had agreed to do, and added 'we have had three converted, and have seventeen more to get, and we mean to have them.' This information spread like fire, and night after night the converting work was witnessed until, finally, some sixty souls had found peace; some were added to the existing classes, and a new class of twenty-four was formed." For eight weeks, every night except Saturday, the meetings



Rev. G. FOWLER.



Rev. J. SMITH.



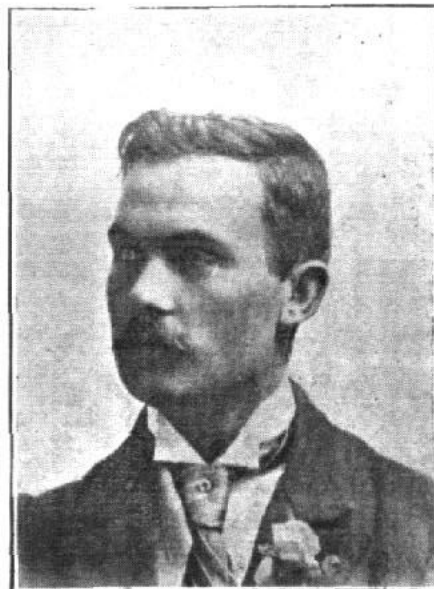
Rev. T. RUSSELL.



Rev. L. NORRIS.



Rev. J. RIDE.



Mr. N. W. SUTTON.

were continued, and "thank God, we are not weary." This was evidently another fire-centre of the Circuit Revival last referred to.

This account of early Revivals shall be completed by extracts from Mr. Preston's "Account of the work of God at a village called Broad Town, in the Brinkworth Circuit." He had received an impression that he should "stop again (as superintendent) and get . . . members, and you will have a thousand." This was May 1840. Spoken of to friends, "they began to pray for God to pour out his spirit," including the friends at Broad Town, where Mrs. Miles "engaged to raise up a new class and to get twenty of the number. Nothing particular BROAD occurred till Sept. 11th. Then, Mr. Hugh TOWN. Bourne (a frequent visitor to the Circuit at this period), Mr. Hill, Mr. and Mrs. Miles, and myself entered into a covenant to pray to God to turn the River of Life upon Broad Town." Mr. Bourne preached, many of the officials were much enlightened thereby and one backslider was reclaimed. Protracted Meetings began on November 1st with Processioning, a walking prayer meeting, good services and a week of meetings. In February 1841, seven were converted, and this is the final report. "A great work has taken place, and it has been chiefly effected by the local preachers and the pious-praying laborers. Two new classes were raised up. Forty members were added to the Society. A Class

Leader reports, "We have got the greatest drunkards and Sabbath breakers brought in, and all the persecutors but one." Before Mr. Preston left, the thousand members were obtained. "We will ruin Satan's kingdom," they sang, and in many hearts they did so, never to be set up again.

Revivals as great as these have followed since. Sept. 1861 to Sept. 1865 saw an increase of 168; the two years ending Dec. 1882 record an increase of 170; and from March 1904 to March 1907 there has been an increase of 160. The Evangelistic section of Centenary Celebrations ought to result in taking the total membership up to one thousand. We have the opportunity; it seems that we have the call.

Whatever critics there may be of Revivals, and Revivalism, it seems plain that this is the way in which God works, and that settles everything. "A Revival answers all things"; peace is obtained in place of strife; faith which overcometh the world is raised thereby; courage and every Christian virtue, even that of liberality is stimulated; and those are added daily to the church who shall be saved. With these invariable results, there is nothing left worth criticising, and every Primitive Methodist should be a revivalist.

2. CHAPEL BUILDING.

A Church must have a Home, a place of Meeting which is beyond interference. Scores of

villages in the Brinkworth and Swindon District are to-day without a Primitive Methodist Church, where once one existed, and almost the sole reason is, that a chapel was not erected. In most cases, the blame for this is to be laid to the charge of bigotry on the part of landowners. Hundreds of times have our village churches endeavoured to obtain a site, but all in vain. The high church Parson has poisoned the mind of the Squire, or it has been already poisoned, and a stern refusal has been met with again and again. The land is theirs, and if they hold the land, they hold the people too—such is their sinful notion. Fools are they. The Land is God's gift to all and those who have added "field to field until there is no room," He will bring to account. For the present, however, they triumph. As a matter of fact if they but knew it, they have to thank the very people they persecuted for staving off what threatened to be a bloody revolution in the hard times of the thirties and the "Hungry Forties."

LOCKED-UP Still, what Church bells loudly rung
 LAND. could not do, what abuse, assault,
 dismissal, imprisonment could not do,
 their hitherto impregnable position as holders of the land has enabled them to do—with results just indicated. Thank God the time of the People is coming, the Power of the Peers must pass away.

In these matters the Brinkworth Circuit has had no easier task than other Circuits, tho' its work is not

quite done. It is approaching completion however, and by the end of the Centenary celebrations it is probable that at every place within the Circuit bounds, where it is desired, a chapel will have been erected, or a site of land secured. From the beginning to now, there has been one long sustained struggle to obtain the necessary foothold. Because this has been impossible, places have been abandoned for a generation, and other churches have been driven from pillar to post, until the inevitable weakness has resulted in the vacating of the village. The difficulties which have had to be overcome may be gathered from what follows.

Name of Church.				Date of Formation.	Date of Chapel or Site.
Brinkworth	...	...	...	1824	... 1828
Cricklade	...	...	...	1824	... 1856
Broad Town	...	...	...	1824	... 1827
Wootton Bassett	...	...	...	1825	... 1831
Goatacre	...	...	...	1827	... 1867
Clack	...	...	...	1825	... 1828
Hook	...	...	...	1827	... 1886
Tockenham	...	...	...	1828	... 1863
Grittenham	...	...	...	1827	... 1894
Purton	...	...	...	1828	... 1843
Greenhill (afterwards Lydiard)	...	...	...	1828	... 1863
Purton Stoke	...	...	...	1830	... 1832
Preston	...	...	...	1830	... 1906
Bushton	...	...	...	1843	etc. 1874
Ashton Keynes	...	...	...	1833-4	... 1841
Winterbourne (Barwick)	...	...	...	1833-4	... 1904
Gospel Oak (Leigh)	...	...	...	1835	... 1860
Minety	...	...	...		... 1863
Braydon	...	...	...		... 1889
Broad Hinton	...	...	...	1838	etc. 1907
Callow Hill	...	...	...		... 1889

Allowing for a few years for strength to be developed this list affords some striking instances of hope deferred and efforts unavailing. Oftentimes, as everyone knows, to obtain a cottage, or even a barn or shed, was equally impossible. The old spirit of sectarian opposition is not quite dead yet. At this moment there lies in the writer's pocket book a letter containing a landowner's statement, in response to an application, that he objects "to any meetings of any kind being held in any of my cottages." Thereby hangs a tale, in which the laugh is on our side, but this is not the time to tell it, lest others suffer.

Up to 1844, the date we have previously noted as one of the Circuit's greatest strength, it had only been possible to erect twelve chapels in all the thirty or forty places included in the present Brinkworth and Swindon Circuits; the rest of the churches were still worshipping in rented rooms of all kinds or in private dwellings. The busiest period of chapel building was 1856 to 1868, when Purton (2nd), Cricklade, Purton Stoke (2nd), Leigh, Minety, Lydiard, Goatacre, and Tockenham were built, and also the Jubilee Chapel at Brinkworth. But on and on through the years, the Circuit authorities had put forth all strength to secure sites. Deputations, memorials, letters, were sent and sent again, and only after long long waiting at Grittenham, Tockenham, Lydiard, Hook, Winterbourne, Goatacre,

Preston, did the Church obtain its site. The Death or the financial embarrassment of the opponent alone in several cases, opened the way.

The photographs found in this volume indicate very clearly, that the style of chapel, and the size thereof, were determined by strict necessity alone. All the early ones were plain village chapels. In the later ones a little more than "four walls and a ceiling" was attempted, and the improvements of recent date have made them fairly comfortable and attractive both inside and out. Still, in valuing them,

it is to be remembered that many of

THE them are way-side chapels. Save a few,
 CHAPELS. every village is a scattered one, and the population small; the little chapel has largely met all necessities, and, generally, luxuries were unattainable. During the first twenty years at least of our history, the wages of farm laborers, or "journeymen farmers" as Rev. Stewart Hooson used to say, were only some six to eight shillings for a full week's work, and very often of course that was not obtainable. The comparatively high wages of to-day are of quite recent experience, and high faith was necessary in the past in order to give sufficiently to carry on the work of building at all. Fortunately all classes of workers are combined in the Primitive Methodism of North Wilts. Considering the times, the needs, the opportunities, the verdict of Rev. S. Turner in the early fifties was deserved:—"the

chapels erected are a credit to the Circuit." The beautiful little chapel built at Winterbourne in 1904, is perhaps a forerunner of the style of the future.

3. LIBERALITY.

Brinkworth Circuit prides itself on its liberality. Like all good Methodist Circuits it is convinced that a grateful heart will make gifts for the support of God's cause. In the measure of financial support of its ministers, it claims to lead generally, circuits of its class, and very often the claim could be sustained. Through all its career, the appeal of any distressed chapel case has been heartily responded to. Coopers Gardens, Rochdale, Oxford, and many other chapels received donations from the Circuit Funds in their day of need, or a special collection was appointed to be made throughout the Circuit on their behalf. It may be stated, tho' it is not to be made much of, that the support of its Missions, from 1829 to 1857, from the Berkshire Mission to the Malmesbury Mission, brought a charge on its funds of £800 or £900, which even in its times of depression, was cheerfully given, that sinful men might have the gospel preached unto them. From the beginning it established a Circuit Charitable Fund, which continues and helps to this day. Since the cessation of its own missions, it has been noted for its liberal support of the Missionary Funds. One of the first Circuits to declare its decision to send up all its missionary money to the

Central Fund, it has ever since been a good Missionary Circuit; over a hundred pounds a year (to the two funds) has often been sent. Rarely it happened that the ministers' salaries were deficient, but when that did occur, in the thirties, record was made, and the back salaries were carefully paid. Connexional institutions, such as The Institute, were supported from their inception. Extravagance was and is unthought of, but needs are met, and often a little over. Especially in times of distress, through sickness, etc., has the sympathy been quick, perhaps quicker than justice at other times, and a grant has been forthcoming. "A Balance in Hand" in all quarters is the most frequent experience. Its hospitality has always been great. The early preachers, who suffered much in all ways, were, like all their successors, heartily welcomed in the homes—homes which very much helped to make the Circuit. If at first a "meal bill" for each unmarried minister was necessary at each quarter-day, it was of very small dimensions. With increase of worldly goods, friendship and hospitality kept pace, and Mr. I. S. Nullis records that "the friends in the Brinkworth Circuit consider it a disgrace to have a Board Bill," and kept open house for the ministers everywhere. To-day, when there is no need either for ministers or people to think of the Board Bill, the hospitality is as ready as could possibly be desired, and giving and receiving it are practised by all.

4. EDUCATION.

In China the *feet* are bound, and so stunted. In England the fetters are upon the *brain*—the feet and hands may grow. Not brains but bodies the governing classes have desired for their service. For themselves they have filched many University Colleges and Schools which were founded for all, but their stupidity often remains. Love of man, as well as knowledge, is required to make intelligence, and in love they have been tremendously lacking. Why give knowledge to the “lower orders” when it is only work that is required. Stupid governing classes! Not able to see the Man! Blind to the Image of God! Not knowing that “all men are brothers,” and, as a consequence, starving their own souls. Where Primitive Methodism triumphs the

brain fetters must be broken, and this
 DAY not for narrow sectarian purposes.
 SCHOOLS. Before the boastful State Church had
 thought of such a thing, our Wootton
 Bassett, Broad Town, Purton, Brinkworth and
 Cricklade churches had established Day-schools, and
 do not speak to-day of “the sacrifices for Education.”
 The Circuit Ministers took regular rounds of
 appointments to give religious instruction of a
 denominational kind—at the expense of the Church
 and not the rates, and if necessary would do it again.

A former minister of the Circuit has been heard to declare that “the strength of the Brinkworth

Circuit lies in its Sunday Schools." This testimony is to a great extent true. From the beginning, attention was paid to the young. The Quarterly Meetings of the Circuit very early decided that every effort should be made to establish Sunday Schools. The S. Schools to-day are well staffed, but as to the accommodation provided the commendation would not be true. Large Sunday Schools, with many classes, at work in one small chapel, find great difficulty in doing efficient work, and in this matter the Brinkworth Circuit cannot boast at REFORM all; it is not advanced as it should be. A NEEDED. beginning of improvement has been made, but in spite of its past creditable record in Sunday School work, it is to be prayed for that a Sunday School Reform Era may soon dawn. An infants' room, and classrooms for senior classes, are urgent necessities in all but the small schools, and it is time to arise and build.

5. TEMPERANCE.

To abstain from the use of intoxicants as a beverage, is the duty of all Christians in these enlightened days, and a Church has not reached maturity from which Temperance organisations and work are lacking. During the past eighteen years a great improvement has taken place in the Temperance sentiment of this Circuit. Then, quite a powerful opposition was manifested against the earnest

Temperance advocate; to-day, the Bands of Hope are gathering their harvest, and the moderate drinker is on his defence. For long, beer had a place on the Quarterly Meeting dinner table, and not in small quantities; a barrel was consumed thereat as late as 1838. Publicans were found among the most influential officials, and the growth of the anti-intoxicant movement was very gradual at first. It is surprising that it was so. In one year, 1834-5, no less than eight officials had been turned **BARRELS** out for drunkenness, one of whom had **OF ALE.** been a minister; while others had to be frequently admonished. Perhaps this resolution of the Quarterly Meeting of March 1843, is the first indication of an awakening to the need of reform: "That our Local Preachers be requested to avoid going to Public Houses on Sundays." No doubt, for some of our young people to read this will be somewhat of a shock, if new, but it must be remembered that this was in accordance with the universal sentiment and practices of those times.

The Temperance advocate amongst the local preachers soon appears, but he is forbidden to deliver teetotal lectures in any of our chapels. **TEMPERANCE** He makes a vigorous protest; others **MILITANT.** back him up, including some of the Travelling Preachers, and in a twelve month the first official sanction and support is given

by a resolution, December 1844, that "a teetotal meeting be held next Quarter Day in the chapel at Wootton Bassett; and that the travelling preachers who are teetotallers conduct it." The protest and zeal of W. P. of Stratton, referred to above, came to light in an intercepted private letter, which was copied into the Minute Book. A few extracts will be permissible. W. P. says, "I believe there is a decided hostility in many parts of the Circuit to "little drop men." . . . Its principal officials are of the "wee drappie sort." . . . We of the Branch of Teetotallers will necessarily have to encounter hardships of one kind or another. . . . The affinity of teetotalism with the Gospel has long been demonstrated, and as it has its rise from so good a source it will move onward in spite of opposition. . . . I have received a Note from Quarter Day on account of what I said, . . . Beware of *the little drop leaven* in your quarter." Some hard words were used therein, but the teetotalism is good. This indicates a stout fight going forward, but the victory quickly came to the right party, and the host of those who now abstain is great.

Thus, the Making of the Circuit, with all its glorious ministry. As a result, Heaven's begun below for thousands, and has been fully entered into above. The sacrifices made were sacrifices of joy. The good that has been wrought blots out the pain

of toil. The persecutions, the toil over the sermon, the giving of "every penny we'd got to the collection," and going out "to earn more for bread," the patient labor of years,—all these things are small in comparison with the rich reward of the Master served; and the heritage is great.

CHAPTER VI.

The Makers of the Circuit.

A MEMOIR of Charles Matthews of Brinkworth declares that "He made the cause of God his own." Such are the Makers of the Church in all ages, and of such Brinkworth Circuit has furnished many examples. The names of many of the greatest (of which God only is true Awarder) are unknown; and the names of many others cannot be recorded; only the most conspicuous can be given. First in the order of Time stand

THE MISSIONARIES

and with them we may associate at once the long line of Ministers who have succeeded them.

The first of them, Mr. Heath, has been referred to as going about "with his one sermon," but that must not be misunderstood. His "one sermon" was

his special "opening" sermon. It spoke terribly of heaven and hell, sin and judgment, and was a great awakening sermon. He was a man of great personal magnetism. Mr. Vaughan, the second missionary sent, was of only "moderate intellectual attainments, but full of zeal and did good work," while the third, Mr. R. Davies, was highly endowed, full of evangelistic fervour also, and became Connexional Book Steward, holding that important office from 1859-65. Of the rest, only a little can be said of a few, but these may be taken as samples, though it be conceded that the samples are specially good.

John Ride, of Weston Underwood, Derbyshire, received the joy of forgiveness while crossing the fields on his way home from a Class Meeting, which he had begun to attend. Hugh Bourne, ever keen to see a "preacher in the making," soon marked him as one who ought to preach. He began in JOHN July 1816 at a Camp Meeting. He returned RIDE. from America to which he had emigrated, in 1820, a widower. He became a "Missionary" on the powerful Cheshire (Burland) Mission; then to Liverpool, where he was sent to prison, but soon liberated; thence to Frome and so to Brinkworth, the beginning of his great career as a Pioneer of the South. His was undoubtedly the great "Forward Spirit" of the Brinkworth District from that time for sixteen years. He was Organiser and Evangelist too. Mr. Kendall gives words that sum up the

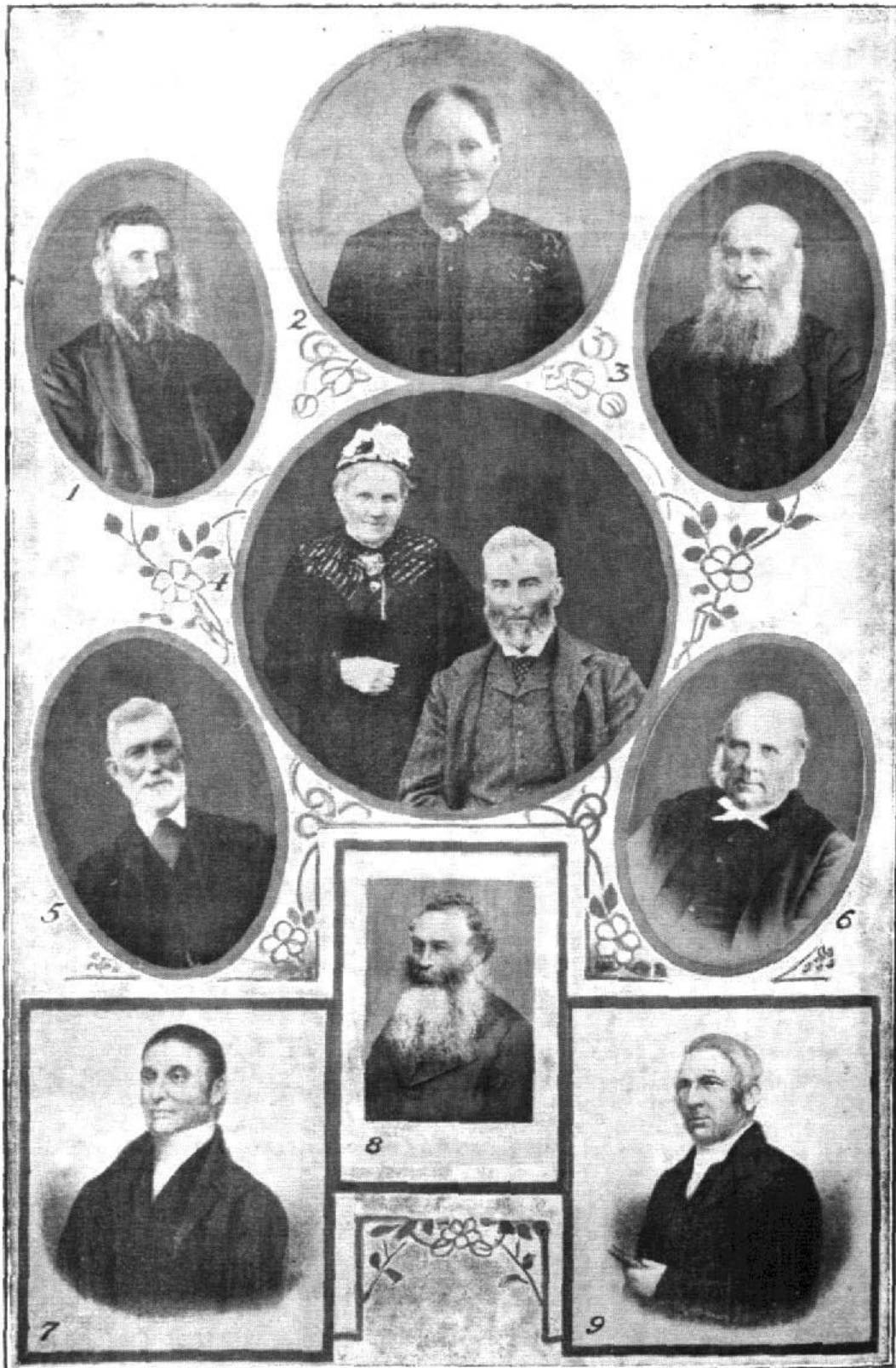
man from the beginning to the end. He quotes from one who saw him and knew his work in the twenties:—"Oh, how he did labour! His zeal seemed to have no bounds." Thus was John Ride always.

Samuel West was twice the superintendent of the Brinkworth Circuit, and the senior of the two Missionaries who founded our Church in Bristol. He was equally successful "in conserving ground already occupied or in entering new fields." He was born at Copper Ridge Farm, Motcombe, Devon, in 1805, and died early in 1867. His last station was Brinkworth.

Joseph Preston entered the Circuit at its weakest period. At the end of his five years, the Circuit reported 600 increase of members, and seven additional travelling preachers were sent out. He took in hand the Wootton Bassett "Golden System" and firmly established it in the Circuit. A man of great energy and devotion, he lived to a ripe age and died in triumph.

William Driffield, a strong man, is described as "the finest preacher ever in the Circuit, and he wore top boots." The Minute Books he has left behind mark him as a man brusque and firm.

Samuel Turney was at the first a most successful pioneer, and then one of the strongest superintendents



1. Mr. S. WESTMACOTT. 2. Mrs. GINGELL. 3. Rev. H. YEATES.
 4. Mr. & Mrs. W. WEST. 5. Mr. H. HITCHCOCK. 6. Rev. G. WALLIS.
 7. Rev. W. DRIFFIELD. 8. Mr. JAS. HASKINS. 9. Rev. J. PETTY.

of the Brinkworth District. He was spoken of often as "the gentlemanly Samuel Turner." So he was, and as such he endured hardships, and before magistrates insisted on his citizen rights. When these did not help him he preached without counting the cost. An account given of one of his removals at "changing time" will give us a sidelight into ministerial experience of the early times

A that should not be omitted. "In
REMOVAL. going to Banbury (1848), the journey had to be taken by carrier's van, which, in the afternoon pulled up at a wayside inn just in time to avoid a heavy thunderstorm, which lasted some hours. The evening was advancing before the preacher, his wife, and their five children, one a three weeks old infant, could renew their journey." In 1851, stationed to Brinkworth Circuit, he refused to live at the village, for which he was probably never quite forgiven by the officials. His decision was wise, nevertheless, and his going to Swindon much helped the somewhat feeble society of that day in this important town. It is said that many who were in contact with Mr. Turner as young ministers, remember him as a strict disciplinarian.

William Hazell, "feared neither man nor devil," and conquered the spiteful efforts of bigotry at Lydiard. George Wallis was a native of Wootton Bassett, converted there, and a "diplomatic" super. Some of his sons became ministers also.

Of the others, each made his mark, and is held in grateful remembrance. The place of the Ministers as true Makers of the Circuit no one would dream of questioning, and the respect they have won, the co-operation they have received, and the work they have been able, in consequence, to accomplish, has been their great reward. Rumors come down from the past that sometimes officials forgot themselves and occupied considerable time in "dealing with the ministers"; forgot the respect due to the ministerial office, and gave much needless and undeserved pain to the men who filled it. It *has* happened in Circuits, that what we may call "A Lay Superintendent" has taken up the role of superintending the ministers and the Circuit. He generally ended badly. In the Brinkworth Circuit there is no record of such, and it may be taken that the ministers and the laymen of the past were generally, what they are to-day,—Comrades in arms, without mutual antagonism, and only seeking, under God, to work together as Makers of the Circuit,—to save men.

It will be convenient here to give a list of the Ministers who have "travelled" in the Circuit from the beginning, with dates. The letters in brackets (B), etc., indicate the places of Residence:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| (B) Brinkworth | (S) Seagry |
| (W) Wootton Bassett | (Sw) Swindon |
| (C) Cricklade | |
| (M) means Missionary | |

Dates.	Names of Ministers.
1827-28.	S. Heath, G. Holloway, E. Foizey, J. Kellett M. Cutler.
1828-29.	J. Ride (w), R. Jukes (s), J. Moore (s), E. Smith (s).
1829-30.	J. Ride (w), J. Bell (s), J. Moore (s), J. Petty and R. Jukes (<i>missionaries</i>), T. Russell (w), E. Smith (w), W. Towler (m), N. Watkins.
1830-31.	J. Bell (w), T. Adams (w), J. Ride, T. Russell J. Hurd & E. Smith (<i>missionaries</i>), J. Evans (w).
1831-32.	S. West (s), J. Hurd (s), M. Harding (s), T. Adams (s), S. Harding (s), J. Bell (w), E. Smith (w).
1832-33.	S. West (s), T. Powell (s), S. Turner (m) (s), A. Sly (s), J. Baker (s), J. Coxhead, J. Parsons, J. Crowage.
1833-34.	W. Strongman (s), J. Baker (w), J. Black- more (w), J. Wigley (w), W. Sadler (w).
1834-35.	W. Strongman, C. Day, W. Watts, J. Blackmore, A. Hodgson, J. Garbutt, E. Rawlings.
1835-36.	J. Garbutt (w), T. Williams (w), E. Rawl- ings (w), B. Trip (w), H. Passmore (w), S. Timmins (w).
1836-37.	J. Garbutt (w), S. Timmins (w), E. Rawlings (w).
1837-38.	J. Preston (B), J. Excell (B), J. Maylard (B), C. Ferris.
1838-39.	J. Preston (B), W. Nation (B), J. Lewis (B), J. Excell (B).

Dates.	Names of Ministers.
1839-40.	J. Preston (B), J. Holloway (B), R. Hill (B), J. Godwin (B), J. Tayler (B).
1840-41.	J. Preston (B), C. Brevitt (B), J. Tayler (B), J. Stroud (B), J. Brooks (B), J. Campion (B).
1841-42.	J. Preston (B), J. Best (B), J. Campion (B), E. Minton (B).
1842-43.	W. Driffield (B), T. Meredith (B), E. Minton (B), W. Nation (B), T. Green (B), J. Brooks (B).
1843-44.	W. Driffield (B), T. Burgess (B), H. Buss (B), T. Green (B), G. Eudall (B), N. Tranter (B).
1844-45.	W. Driffield (B), T. Green (B. s. w), T. Burgess (B), N. Tranter (B), H. Heys (w), W. Knock (s).
1845-46.	W. Driffield (B), H. Heys (w), W. Knock (s), G. Brewer (w), H. Platt (w).
1846-47.	W. Driffield (B), I. Hedges (w), W. Knock (w), W. Osgood (w), H. Platt (w), C. Boulton (w), J. Fuller (w).
1847-48.	E. Bishop (B), I. Hedges (w), J. Knight (w), J. Fuller (w).
1848-49.	E. Bishop (B), I. Hedges (w), J. Fuller (w).
1849-50.	T. Cummin (B), I. Hedges (w), J. Fuller (w).
1850-51.	T. Cummin (B), W. Hazell (w), J. Knight (Sw), S. Osmond (w).
1851-53.	S. Turner (Sw), J. Willimot (B), W. Hazell (w), S. Osmond (w).
1853-55.	S. Turner (Sw), G. Eudall (B), L. Dobinson (w), G. Warner (w) (M).

Dates.	Names of Ministers.
1855-56.	G. Wallis (Sw), J. S. Brown (B), G. Waite (w), G. Warner (M), G. Beale (B), I. S. Nullis (w).
1856-57.	G. Wallis (Sw), J. S. Brown (B), G. Waite (w), G. Warner (M), I. S. Nullis (w), G. Beale (w).
1857-58.	G. Wallis (Sw), T. Powell (M), G. Beale (w), D. Day (B).
1858-59.	S. West (Sw), D. Day (B), J. Herridge (w), T. Powell (M).
1859-60.	S. West (w), J. Herridge (Sw), J. Hill (B).
1860-61.	W. Hazell (Sw), S. West (w), J. Hill (B), T. Grace (w).
1861-62.	W. Hazell (w), J. Hill (B), G. Morgan (Sw), S. Clarke (c).
1862-63.	W. Hazell (w), G. Fowler (B), G. Morgan (Sw), S. Clarke (c).
1863-65.	T. Powell (w), G. Fowler (B), E. Alford (Sw), C. Portnall (c).
1865-66.	T. Powell (w), T. Kench (B), E. Alford (Sw), J. Neville (w).
1866-67.	T. Powell (w), J. Bendle (B), L. Norris (Sw), J. Neville (w).
1867-68.	T. Jackson (w), J. Bendle (B), L. Norris (Sw), J. Neville (w), [J. Ford (B), C. Anthony (c)].
1868-69.	T. Jackson (w), J. Ford (B), L. Norris (Sw), C. Anthony (c).
1869-70.	T. Jackson (w), J. Ford (B), N. Watts (Sw), C. Anthony (c).

Dates.	Names of Ministers.
1870-72.	H. Platt (w), N. Watts (Sw), H. Portnall (B), J. H. Green (c).
1872-73.	H. Platt (w), H. Portnall (B), J. H. Green (c), T. Pinnoch (Sw).
1873-75.	H. Platt (w), W. Sheasby (B), T. Pinnock (Sw), T. Saunders (c).
1875-76.	H. Yeates (w), R. Taylor (B), T. Pinnock (Sw), T. Saunders (c).
1876-77.	H. Yeates (w), R. Taylor (B), T. Pinnock (Sw), J. Squires (c).
1877-79.	H. Yeates (w), G. Litten (B).
1879-80.	S. Hooson (w), G. Litten (B).
1880-83.	S. Hooson (w), J. E. Sunderland (B).
1883-84.	S. Hooson (w), T. Phelps (B).
1884-85.	L. Norris (w), T. Phelps (B).
1885-88.	L. Norris (w), J. Badminton (B).
1888-91.	D. Harding (w), W. L. Taylor (B).
1891-94.	J. Neville (w), J. Sheppard (B).
1894-95.	J. Neville (w), W. Haddow (B).
1895-98.	T. Kench (w), W. Haddow (B) (w), E. Simpkins (B).

Mr. Kench died at Wootton Bassett, October 1897.

1898-1901.	W. Haddow (w), J. A. Snaith (B).
1901-02.	S. Ainsworth (w), F. H. Brown (B).
1902-04.	S. Ainsworth (w), E. Parsons (B).
1904-05.	W. C. Tonks (w), W. Haddow (B), F. J. Harper (B).

Mr. Haddow died October 1904.

1905-	W. C. Tonks (w), A. Marshall (B).
-------	-----------------------------------

After the Missionary, his first supports from among his converts in the building up of the Church, comes the Local Preacher and the Class Leader. In the history of Methodism, these two have ever been of vital necessity; and ever will be as long as Methodism seeks for the highest path of usefulness. Without the former, the evangelistic ministry would lack recruits, and the best vein of pulpit power would be unused; without the latter, the individual member of the churches would lack nourishment. The popularity and respect a good local preacher achieves is in need of no argument, while a good Class leader is ever a Bishop beloved, an Under Shepherd, whom the sheep delight to follow.

THE LOCAL PREACHER

has had a great place in the developement of the Brinkworth Circuit. His quality has been varied both as to zeal and ability; men with one sermon tho' many texts, and men with no sermon at all. Others who never missed appointments, and others who suffered from Sunday sickness; fair-weather preachers and preachers ever-reliable. We have these last to-day; and we have men who will ride, on horse or bicycle, or drive through over twenty miles of rain to honor "small" village appointments, and men who will take weeknight appointments as well as on Sunday, at a considerable expense of strength and comfort. Two by two in the days past they often

went to mission or re-mission a village, and as was said of Henry Curtis, of Leigh, "have often had a rotten egg up agen the side of *hees* head." Men of resource, they were able to sing down a village street alone in the darkness and rain (such an instance has occurred within the last twelve-month), and if not very musical, of sufficient courage to sing the same tune to six different hymns rather than stick fast.

The training of Local preachers in the past was not very much systematised, but help was continually rendered by ministers and others. As we have read, "Usefulness is better than polish, but improvement must not be neglected;" a keen edge is better than a blunt one on any axe, and to a hammer TRAINING. a good handle is essential. The training classes of to-day are proving very beneficial. The intellectual standard of the local preacher has already been raised thereby, while no barrier is placed in the way of any one who "ought to preach." The young man who cannot prepare himself for these examinations, must be much lacking in mental capacity or zeal, and would not be likely to do much service on the Plan. This, to some extent, the Circuit has always borne in mind, and as far back as 1860 e.g., we have a resolution of Quarterly Meeting that "Mr. Gantlett give a lecture at the next Quarterly Meeting on the means to be used for the improvement of our lay ministry." Men with well furnished minds like those of the Circuit Steward

of the present day or Mr. J. Haskins of Purton, have done much to keep up the intellectual standard in particular, and men of keen intelligence coupled with whole hearted zeal like the late "George Hatter," as everybody knew him, have let the mantle fall upon the Suttons and Youngs of to-day. The fullest knowledge, the keenest thought, the fieriest heart:—these are the equipment required for the local preacher, and such precious gifts that such men are, we pray the Lord of the harvest to continue to send.

THE CLASS LEADER

in Methodism is as essential as the preacher. Theirs is a great task—difficult to perform, but great in its results. Spiritual oversight is a delicate undertaking, requiring great honesty and wisdom. Like the preacher, the Class Leaders life should be very clean, and his knowledge of the Bible and of human nature extensive. A preacher must not exhort a converted congregation to "Turn to the Lord," nor must a Class Leader exhort to regular attendance at the Means of Grace, one who never stays away. But if a Class Leader has gained the confidence of his members, the way is always open for reproof, for correction, for encouragement, for counsel. The Class Leader is a Leader in the Spiritual, and needs to be full of faith, and hope and love. He should know, as intimately as possible, the spiritual experience of every member of his class, and in the secret

chamber of many a Class Leader's heart is the memory of help he has given that has saved from falling. Year in and year out, the Leaders labor; much of their work is unseen, but it is the saving work of the societies. Men like Mr. Sweeper, Mr. E. L. Gardner, and the Wests, father and son, are great conserving forces in their societies; may their numbers increase.

To pass from these details to a more general view, there are men who in the history of the Circuit, have been known by the Circuit, and looked up to as men who were makers of the Circuit and whose building was visible to all. Apart from those who may be mentioned later there were men who, like

Mr. Henry Hitchcock, of Brinkworth,

THE were typical Builders of their own Societies.
 SOCIETY He loved the Connexion, the Circuit, and
 MAN. that love was rooted in the love of his own
 church at Brinkworth. When he died, he

had been doing so much for so long that his loss was most keenly felt. He served the Church and the community, better than he served his own fortune, and was a tower of strength to those who sought righteousness. The longer he lived, the more wide and deep the respect he gained, and the strength and influence of Brinkworth Church owed very much to him. He is a type of many. The strength of the Brinkworth Circuit lies here—it has never failed for long to produce, when wanted, its Society Man or

Woman. We think of the Matthews' of Brinkworth, the Wests of Braydon and Minety, the Miles' and Humphries' of Broad Town, Eli Holloway and George Hatter of Tockenham, Franklin of Clack, Turners of Winterbourne, Blackmans of Goatacre, and a galaxy of such men and women at Wootton Bassett and Purton and elsewhere in the past and present. Men and women these who "hold things together," with music in their hearts, and with courage and persistence and geniality as their main characteristics.

Others have been particularly known for their work in the Circuit Courts. Mr. S. Gantlett of

Wootton Bassett might be taken as a type.

THE HE WAS Circuit Steward from 1861 till he
CIRCUIT died—for over twenty years. "His judg-
MAN. ment was sound and was respected. His

business habit and ready grasp of the various questions raised in official meetings rendered his presence always important; so that he was generally consulted and his views ascertained. He made his mark as a thoroughly efficient laymen of the Primitive Methodist Connexion." Other names come before us; Mr. Ind and J. Smith of Wootton Bassett, in the distant past; the Rummings and C. Morse of the middle period, and the Westmacotts, C. Gardner, and the Circuit Men of the present day. Such fitness have the Brinkworth "Circuit Men" shown that it has become an understanding in the

District Committees that it is always perfectly "safe to sanction any application that comes from Brinkworth—it is sure to be sound in all particulars."

Mr. J. Sweeper is a man of many parts, and may be taken as a type of the Connexional Man of the Circuit. His work at home is great, but it has extended widely too. Very often a Member of the District Meeting, he has four times represented the District in Conference, and has the privilege of being selected as a preacher at the Mow Cop Centenary Camp Meeting now in progress (May 25-27, 1907). As a Member of the Connexional Sunday School Committee for many years, he has played a worthy part in the development of Connexional Sunday School Life.

A very important item in the Making of any Circuit is the Singing of the Songs of Zion, and men and women who have been able "to start a tune," have been great helpers as makers of the Circuit. In every Society these have been very valuable in the past, and the position they occupied was a strong one. In spite of instruments of music, the need for them is almost as great to-day as ever. Indeed, one would like to see special attention paid to this matter, and the rise of more young men and women who are masters of tunes of the right sort, that "go well" in

prayer meeting and class meeting. Class leaders would do well to seek out and train those who can "strike a tune" anywhere and anywhen. What a fine help at the Camp Meetings and Processionings ("This Circuit abounds in Processioning," said Hugh Bourne,) were Edmund Belcher, Eli Holloway, Thomas Chun. There is not one living who can "hold a candle" to them. The Primitive Methodist Singing Man is a fine production, and invaluable to any church or Circuit—the full voice, the correct ear and taste, the quick sense of the appropriate—these are his marks.

One of the most valuable "makers" has been Mr. C. Maslin of Wootton Bassett. In addition to other work, he has specialised on "Debt reduction," and in the surrounding villages, has for many years greatly stimulated this work.

A DEBT REDUCER. He is known as "a ter'ble man to get debts paid off." At Wootton Bassett also he has done admirably in this direction, and as "a giver and a getter" is a good type of those who prevent financial worry and difficulty.

The Makers of the Circuit are often times to be found in families as well as scintillating in solitary greatness, and brief notes may be given of a few of these. At a Lovefeast conducted by Rev. S. Turner in 1832, Miss Ferris, who was socially well-connected,

was converted. She was known as being "gay and dressy," but on her conversion this was at once altered to "becoming plainness." Mr. Smith, to whom she was afterwards married, and her sister, were also brought to God at that time. Mr. and Mrs. Smith

took an active and leading part in
 NOTED Primitive Methodism; they were both
 FAMILIES. local preachers; their house was always
 open to God's servants; they did much
 in all ways to help build a good substantial sanctuary
 in 1838, and in the establishment of Day Schools.
 It is said that Mrs. Smith "upon principle, gave £50
 yearly to religious and benevolent purposes" and
 often more.

The Humphries family, with the heads, Samuel, Jacob and Isaac, of Broad Town and Wootton Bassett, was another of the strong. At the height of their power, their influence was very great, and their generosity much helped the various building projects of that time. Mr. Isaac Humphries was for seven years a travelling preacher, and Mrs. L. L. Morse, his daughter, was born in the historic preacher's house at Shefford. His daughters at Broad Town worthily follow in the steps of their pious and zealous parents.

The family of the Rummings has been described by our friend Rev. G. Fowler as "A Remarkable Family of Free Churchmen," William Rummings,

father of Mr. W. Rumming of Pitt's lands ; James Rumming, John Rumming, Thomas Rumming of Hook Farm, Henry Rumming and Jacob Rumming of Ponds Farm, Purton Stoke. Of these, William, Thomas and James were best known in this Circuit ; though Mr. Jacob Rumming, a Congregationalist, was also well known, a good helper, and highly esteemed. At Grittenham, Mr. Wm. Rumming lived an influential life, great and good ; Mr. Jas. Rumming was a minister for five years and then returned to farming, and lived at Purton ; Mr. Thos. Rumming occupied an influential official position in the Circuit for many years, helping especially the churches at Hook and Lydiard. Than the family at Pitt's Lands to-day, there is none more highly respected.